THE BIBLE AND RATIONALISM OR

ANSWER TO DIFFICULTIES IN THE
BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

BY
REV. JOHN THEIN

PART THREE

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THE BIBLE AND RATIONALISM OR

ANSWER TO DIFFICULTIES

IN THE BOOKS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

By REV. JOHN THEIN

Author of "Christian Anthropology," Answer to Difficulties of the Bible," "Catechism of Rodez," and "Ecclesiastical Dictionary." : : : : : : : :*

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** The present work, under a different title, forms Part Third of a new edition of "Answer to Difficulties of the Bible," completely revised and greatly enlarged.*

PART III

THE WORK WILL COMPRISE FOUR VOLUMES; EACH VOLUME FORMS A WHOLE BY ITSELF AND SELLS SEPARATELY. . . . .

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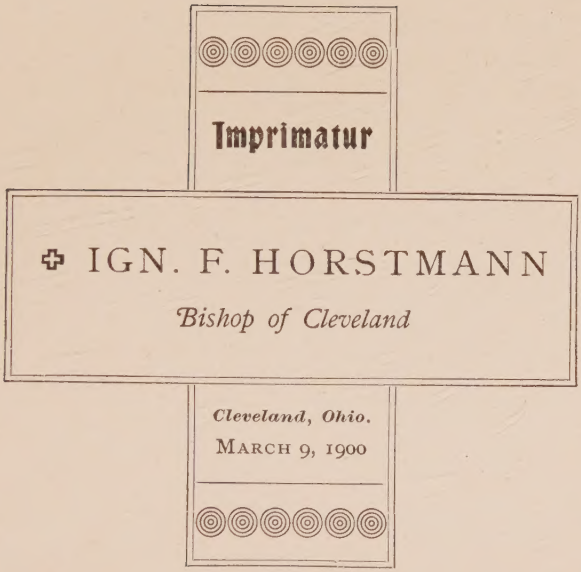
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THE GOSPELS AND THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

CHAPTER I

ON THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE GOSPELS IN GENERAL

During the last century, rationalistic criticism has tried various means to combat the Gospels. First they made the attempt to eliminate from them every supernatural element by the natural explanation of miracles; then they tried to deny their authenticity and historic value with the aid of the mystic explanation of Strauss or hypotheses of the School of Tübingen (Germany). In our time, they acknowledge that the origin of the Gospels can be explained neither by mysticism alone, nor by the naturalism of Paulus or the system of Baur on Paulinism and Petrinism, but persist, nevertheless, to combine all these systems in small doses, and so to contest the testimony of the historians of the Saviour. It is, therefore, necessary to establish the authenticity of the four Gospels and to answer the objections they allege against their accounts.

Behold the general proof for this authenticity furnished by tradition. Since the second century of the Christian era, St. Irenæus (about 140—towards 202) affirms with the greatest precision that there are four canonical Gospels, and his testimony is so much more grave and important as, a native of Asia Minor, disciple of St. Polycarp of Smyrna and Bishop of Lyons, he is, so to say, the voice of both the Churches of the East and West. «The belief in the Gospels,» he says, «is so firmly established that the heretics themselves render testimony to them, and that all those among them that are separated from us, try to confirm their

own doctrine by the authority of these Gospels. The Ebionites, making use only of the Gospel according to Matthew, are so convinced by this Gospel that they do not think about the Lord with rectitude. Marcion, who cut off a portion from the Gospel according to Luke, has shown himself a blasphemer against the only God by what he preserves thereof. Those who separate Jesus from the Christ and say that the Christ has remained impassible whilst Jesus has suffered, may correct themselves of their errors, if they read with a love of truth the Gospel according to Mark which has their preferences. The followers of Valentinus, who use frequently the Gospel according to John to establish their conjectures, can discover therein that they do not speak with truth. . . . Since, therefore, those who are opposed to us render such testimony and make use of these books, the proof which we draw therefrom against them is well established and true. For there is neither a greater nor a lesser number of Gospels. As there are four cardinal points in the world in which we live, and four principal winds (spirits), as the Church is dispersed all over the earth and as the Gospel with the Spirit of life is the column and firmament of the Church, it is becoming that the Church has four columns, breathing all over incorruptibility and vivification of men. Whence it is manifest that the Word, author of every creature, who is sitting above the Cherubim and contains all things, having appeared among men, has given us a fourfold Gospel, animated by the same spirit. . . . Things, therefore, being thus, they are all vain, ignorant, and audacious, who disfigure the beauty of the Gospel and admit more or less Gospels than those we have enumerated." (*Cont. Haer.* III., xi. 7–8.) St. Irenæus wrote also the following remarkable words: "In spite of the diversity of languages spoken in the world, the power of tradition is all over the same. The Churches of Germany have not in this respect a belief different from that which is accepted in Spain or at the Celts. The Churches founded in the extremities of the East, of Egypt, of Lybia, publish these same facts in the same manner as the Churches placed in the centre of the world. And as only one sun enlightens the whole universe, only one and the same light, one perfectly uniform preaching of the truth enlightens all men who desire to come to the knowledge of this truth." (*Cont. Haer.* I., x. 2.)

This testimony of St. Irenaeus is categorical. That of Clement, of Alexandria, and of Tertullian is not less so. In his *Stromata*, the Egyptian doctor opposes to false and apocryphal Gospels, "the four Gospels that were transmitted to us by tradition," and in his *Hypotyposes*, he relates the following words of an ancient: "He said," he writes, "that the first Gospels that had been compiled are those which contain the genealogies. That according to Mark was composed on the following occasion: when St. Peter had preached publicly the Word at Rome and promulgated the Gospel, under the inspiration of the Spirit, many of his hearers exhorted Mark, who accompanied St. Peter for a long time and knew by heart what the Apostle had said, to put down in writing what he had heard. Having, therefore, written his Gospel, Mark gave it to those that had asked him for it. Peter, having heard thereof, did not encourage him publicly, but did not dissuade him from doing so. As to John (the last of the Evangelists), when he saw that the other Gospels made known the corporal history of Christ, at the request of those who lived with him and inspired by the Holy Ghost, he wrote the spiritual Gospel."

Let us now listen to Tertullian: "The Gospels have for authors the Apostles, to whom the Lord Himself entrusted the mission to promulgate (His doctrine) and the Apostolic men (who wrote it), not alone, but with the Apostles and according to the Apostles. . . . Among the Apostles, John and Matthew communicate to us the faith; among the apostolic men, Luke and Mark renew it." (*Adv. Marc.* iv. 2.)

The belief of the Church, about the origin of our Gospels, in Asia and in Gaul, in Egypt and in Africa, in the time when these ecclesiastical writers were flourishing is, therefore, incontestable. Strauss himself admits this: "After the end of the second century after J. C.," he says, "our four Gospels, as can be seen by the writings of three doctors of the Church, Irenaeus, Clement, of Alexandria, and Tertullian, were acknowledged as coming from Apostles and disciples of the Apostles, among the orthodoxes, and in quality of authentic documents about Jesus, had been separated from a number of other similar productions" (*Leben Jesu*, 3rd edit.). But, quite in acknowledging these facts, which are clear as daylight, rationalistic critics contest, nevertheless, both the authenticity and veracity of our four Gospels. We shall, therefore,

establish against them that the canonical Gospels are from the authors whose names they bear and that their accounts are worthy of belief.

CHAPTER II

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MATTHEW

I. Authenticity and Integrity of the Gospel According to St. Matthew.— Nowhere in antiquity, do we see the least doubt entertained about the authenticity of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, before Faustus the Manichean. Thus tradition proves its apostolic origin. A disciple of St. John, Papias, died about the year 130 of our era, relates expressly, in a passage preserved by Eusebius, that "Matthew wrote in the Hebrew language the discourses (*logia*)" of the Saviour (*In Eusebius, Hist. Eccl.* iii. 29). This testimony is decisive. They have made the attempt to attenuate its bearing, in claiming that Papias wished to speak only of a collection of discourses of Jesus, but this is not the meaning of his words. "What proves," says Mgr. Freppel, "that for Papias the *logia* of St. Matthew did not exclude the account of the facts, is that he himself had entitled his work: *Commentary on the logia of the Lord*, which did not hinder him from occupying himself about facts and to report miracles, as is proved by the fragments preserved by Eusebius. Moreover, in mentioning the Gospel acccording to St. Mark, which, certainly, comprised accounts and discourses, Papias designates them both, like that according to St. Matthew, by the unique term: The whole of the discourses of the Lord; evident proof that, for him, the word *logia* did not exclude at all the account of the facts."

The *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles*, recently discovered, which was composed, at the latest, in the middle of the second century, quotes repeatedly passages from the Gospel according to St. Matthew. It mentions the account of the life of the Saviour, under the already consecrated name of Gospel, and the author, in prescribing how to recite *Our Father*, says: *Do not pray like the hypocrites, but as the Lord has prescribed in His Gospel.* In chapter xi. it also says that we must receive the missionary

Apostles and the prophets, *Conformably to what the Gospel teaches* (Matt. x. 5; vii. 15; x. 40–42); and in chapter xv: *Correct one another, not in anger, but in peace, as you find it in the Gospel* (v. 22; xviii. 15, 21). Finally, this same chapter xv. ends with the recommendation: *The prayers, alms and all the actions you are doing, do them as you find it in the Gospel of our Lord* (vi. 1–8). All these words refer to the Gospel of St. Matthew, which has preserved to us the *Our Father*, reported at length in the *Didache*. In several other places, passages from St. Matthew are reported more or less literally, although the author does not name the Gospel.

St. Irenæus formally says: "Matthew, among the Hebrews composed in their language a writing of the Gospel" (*Adv. Haer.* iii. 1). A contemporary of St. Irenæus, the famous founder of the catechetical school of Alexandria, St. Pantenus, having preached the faith to the Hindoos, that is, to the Arabs of Happy Arabia, found among them, says Eusebius, the Gospel of St. Matthew, written in Hebrew characters, which had been brought to them by the Apostle St. Bartholemew (Eusebius, *H. E.* v. 10). St. Jerome adds that St. Pantenus brought the copy which he had found to Alexandria, and nothing is opposed that we may not consider this tradition well founded (St. Jerome, *De viris illust.* 6). One of the successors of St. Pantenus, as head of the school of Alexandria, Origen, writes in his turn: "The first (Gospel) was written by Matthew, the ancient publican having become since an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and he gave it, composed in Hebrew characters, to those of the Jews who had become faithful" (In Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 25). In Africa, Tertullian knows the four Gospels, as we have already seen, and says that one of them was composed by the apostle St. Matthew (*Adv. Marc.* iv. 2).

The most ancient ecclesiastical writers of both the Orient and Occident are, therefore, agreed in affirming that St. Matthew is the author of one of our four Gospels and it is useless to quote other texts attesting to this fact.

The intrinsic examination of the Gospel according to St. Matthew plainly confirms what the testimonies of the ancients teach us about its origin, end, and character. Behold the avowals which Dr. Strauss makes in regard to this subject and which are important in spite of the errors he has mingled therein: "The Gospel according to Matthew

has appeared to us at all times and appears to us still as the most ancient in date and the most worthy of belief. As to the discourses of Jesus, and whatever may be the doubts that suggest certain particularities, one will always acknowledge that the first Gospel preserves them, if not without mixture and final retouching, at least under a purer form than any of the others. . . . Another indication of the chronological primacy of the first Gospel, is that it bears more than any other the imprint of Jewish nationality which naturally tends to efface itself more and more, in the course of time, in the measure Christianity becomes spread. The author does not fail to call Jerusalem the *holy city;* the temple the *holy place* (iv. 5; xxvii. 53); whilst the others simply name the city or the temple, or use other denominations which do not contain the epithet *holy*. No other explains with so much exactitude the attitude which Jesus took towards the Mosaic law, the Jewish customs and sects, and it is remarkable that in all this, he supposes to be known what Mark believes himself already obliged to comment upon. He sees in the actions and destinies of Jesus the entire fulfillment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and this fulfillment is for him the capital proof of the Messiasship of Jesus. Jesus Himself is still, according to his view, quite burdened with the fetters of Judaism. No other Gospel gives Him so often the title, Son of David; no other has placed quite at the head His genealogy which makes Him descend from David and Abraham; nowhere else does Jesus declare so carefully that He did not come to destroy, but to fulfill the law." (*Neues Leben Jesu.*)

What Strauss says to the detriment of the other Gospels is false; what he tells of retouchings of the first Gospel is also inexact, but it is very true that St. Matthew wrote the first biography of the Saviour, and that his work bears irrefutable marks of its Jewish origin. Thus, as the German critic remarks, St. Matthew supposes all through that the Jewish customs and morals are familiar to his readers and need no explanation. For example, he simply names the *Parasceve* (xxvii. 62), whilst the three other Evangelists, writing no longer in Judea and for the Jews alone, add, "which is before the Sabbath; the Parasceve or preparation of the Pasch" (Mark xv. 42; John xix. 42; cf. Luke xxiii. 54–55). The first Evangelist briefly mentions the purifications introduced by the tradition of the ancients which he knows are perfectly known to

his readers (Matt. xv. 1–2). St. Mark, on the contrary, is careful to tell in detail in what they consist: what it is to eat with common or unclean hands; how the Jews in general and the Pharisees in particular do not eat without having washed their hands conformably to the tradition of the ancients; what they understand by the baptism or purification of the cups, beds, etc. (Mark vii. 2–5). The knowledge of the topography and geography of the Holy Land is always presupposed by St. Matthew, but not by St. Luke and especially not by St. Mark who did not write in Judea. St. Matthew simply names the Jordan (iii. 5, 6); St. Mark adds that it is a river (i. 5). The indications of time are always Jewish in the first Evangelist; in St. Luke they are borrowed from general history. Finally, certain etymologies and different allusions which we find in St. Matthew are intelligible only for those who speak Hebrew and who have read the Scriptures or heard the paraphrases which they made thereof in the synagogues. Thus to understand what is said of the name of our Lord: *Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people* (i. 21), we have to know that Jesus signifies Saviour; also St. Luke, who writes for the Hellenists, simply indicates the name of Jesus, without speaking of its meaning (Luke i. 31; cf. ii. 21).

Some critics, such as Eichorn, have questioned the authenticity of the first two chapters of the Gospel of St. Matthew, because they were wanting in the Gospel of the Ebionites, but these heretics had wrongly eliminated them. We read them in all the manuscripts; they are of the same style as the rest of the Gospel and present to us the person of Jesus under the same traits. The numerous different readings which criticism points out in the various manuscripts and in the ancient versions of St. Matthew and of the other writings which compose the New Testament affect in no manner their substantial integrity. During the last century they have made on this subject the most minutious and most conscientious labors with the view especially to restore the text to its primitive purity and recover the original readings of the sacred authors. All these inquiries have demonstrated the fact that, if a book so often copied and translated as the New Testament had not been protected against all change and all alteration, the foundation at least would have been affected. This is an universally acknowledged fact.

"It is good to note that the alterations of the text about which criticism (of the New Testament) exercises itself are very few in regard to the whole. Westcott and Hort estimate that the words about which there might be some doubt are, in comparison with others, in the proportion of one to seven; by eliminating the small orthographically different readings, the changes of place, etc., the proportion reduces itself to 1–1000. In what remains, very few incertitudes attain the sense, at least in an important manner" (L. Duchesne, *The New Testament in the Original Greek* by Westcott and Hort). Therefore, they hurt in nothing the integrity of the text.

The first Gospel has a seal of its own and so characteristic that it proves its unity and integrity. The author follows a regular and uniform plan; his manner of presenting and his language is throughout the same. We read therein, for instance, twenty-seven times the expression *the kingdom of heaven*, which we never find either in St. Mark or in St. Luke; *the heavenly father* or *who is in heaven*, twenty-two times; *at that time*, as a conjunctive particle, ninety times; *the consumatiou of the world* five times; the formula which generally announces the quotations from the Old Testament: *in order that may be fulfilled what had been said*, appears only once in all the rest of the New Testament, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, etc. The technical expression: *the coin of the tribute* (Matt. xxii. 19), is neither in St. Mark nor in St. Luke, but is peculiar to St. Matthew, who speaks thus with the precision of an ancient tax gatherer.

The extrinsic testimonies and the intrinsic characters of the Gospel of St. Matthew establish, therefore, its authenticity and integrity.

II. Veracity of the Gospel According to St. Matthew.—Our first Gospel being authentic and written by an eyewitness, it follows that it is worthy of belief and that the picture which it traces of our Divine Saviour is historical. Everybody knows, however, that the credibility of the biographies of Jesus Christ has been more or less openly, and with various degrees, contested in our time. A French writer, whose works have been mostly translated into English, has especially rendered himself sadly famous by his attacks on the Gospels. Without absolutely denying their historic character, Renan has sought to diminish it and to make it

disappear in some way as an idle phantom. According to him, the books that have transmitted to us the life of the Saviour were rehashed. "What appears to be very probable," he says, "is that, neither for Matthew nor for Mark, have we the original compositions; that our first two Gospels are already arrangements in which they sought to fill up the omissions of another person's text." (*Vie de Jesus*, p. xix.) This is false; it is a pure invention of Renan: but let us remark that even if it were true and that they would have completed St. Matthew with St. Mark and St. Mark with St. Matthew, both would remain, nevertheless, historical and sources worthy of belief. The author of the *Life of Jesus* cannot help acknowledging this in some sort: "It is clear," he says, "that if these titles are exact, the Gospels, without ceasing to be legendary in part, assume a high value, because they make us go back to the half century that followed the death of Jesus, and even, in two cases, to eyewitness his actions." — St. Matthew and St. John.

Renan admits that St. Matthew is more ancient than St. Luke and St. John, but he maintains, contrary to tradition, and even to the avowals of Strauss which we have reported, that he is posterior to St. Mark. Renan adopts this erroneous opinion in order to attack him more easily. According to him, St. Matthew has not the historic value of St. Mark, but is superior to the latter as to the literary part:

"What is striking above all in the new Gospel, is an immense literary progress. The general effect is that of a fairy palace built entirely of luminous stones. An exquisite vague in the transitions and in the chronological connections gives to this divine compilation the light gait of the account of a child. 'At that hour,' 'at that time,' 'on that day,' 'it happened that . . . ,' and a number of other formulæ, which have the air of being precise but are not, plane the narrative, like a revery, between heaven and earth. Thanks to the indecision of the time,—it is the same with the designations of place,— the evangelical account only grazes the reality. An aërial genius, which one touches and embraces, but who never hurts itself on the pebbles of the road, speaks to us and delights us. He does not stop asking whether he knows what he relates. He doubts nothing and knows nothing. It is a charm analogous to that of affirmation of the woman, which makes us smile and

subdues us. He is in literature what is in painting a child of Correge or a Raphael's virgin of sixteen years.

"The language is of the same order and perfectly appropriate to the subject. By a true turn of force, the clear and childish gait of the Hebrew narrative, the fine and exquisite tone of the Hebrew proverbs have been transported into a quite correct Hellenic dialect under the relation of grammatical forms, but wherein the old and learned syntax is totally broken. They have remarked that the Gospels are the first work written in popular Greek. The ancient Grecism therein is, indeed, modified in the analytic sense of modern languages. The Hellenist has to admit that this language is flat and weak; it is certain that, from the classic point of view, the Gospel has neither style, nor plan, nor beauty; but it is a masterwork of popular literature, and in some sense the most ancient popular book that has been written. This disjointed language has, besides, the advantage that the charm preserves itself in the different versions, so well that, for such writings, the translation is almost worth the original." (*Les Evangiles*, p. 198–199.)

Among the correct and nice observations about the style of St. Matthew, Renan overlooks the gravest errors. It is his desire that the evangelical account should graze the reality, but he is obliged, for the need of his cause, to pretend that the evangelist "knows nothing" of what he relates.

To reject from the first Gospel all that displeases him and then to treat it after his fashion, Renan pretends that the end of St. Matthew was to complete and to correct St. Mark. This is a supposition without foundation and purely imaginary.

Even were it untrue that St. Matthew, as we believe, wrote before St. Mark, it is certain that it was not the purpose of the first to correct the second. The author of the *Origines du Christianisme* feels this himself, for he insists little thereon and tries especially to show that St. Matthew had for object to complete St. Mark. He is not afraid to attribute to him in the fulfilment of his work the gravest awkwardnesses and even ignorance of his subject. "The insertion of unknown traditions into old Mark," he says, "is done by the pseudo-Matthew by violent proceedings. In possession of some miraculous accounts or healings whose identity he does not see with those which are already related in Mark, the author prefers to expose himself to double entries rather than to

omit facts to which he adheres. Before all he desires to be complete and does not trouble himself about falling into contradictions."

Grave accusations, indeed, and we may ask ourselves how one can dare to bring them up against an Evangelist, if he can support them only on hypotheses that are without any real foundation and which the accuser himself can regard only as hypotheses. What does Renan allege to uphold his charges? "Those singular doublets which characterize the first Gospel: two healings of two blind persons; two healings of a dumb demoniac; two multiplications of bread; two demands of a miraculous sign; two invectives against scandal; two sentences on divorce" (*Les Evangiles*, p. 179). As if our Lord could not heal, indeed, twice two blind men; as if He had not multiplied the bread twice, as is proven by the difference of the circumstances and the comparison of the other Gospels; as if the divine Master could not inveigh twice and more against scandal and speak of divorce repeatedly!

Besides, Renan cares very little about being in accord with himself in what he says of St. Matthew. "A sort of outbidding in the employ of the wonderful, the taste for more and more striking miracles . . . dictated," he says, "the most of these additions (of St. Matthew) to the primitive account (of St. Mark). . . . The lines of the new Gospel are broader, more correct, more ideal. The wonderful traits multiply themselves, but we may say that the wonderful seeks to become more acceptable. The miracles are less clumsily related, certain prolixities are omitted" (*Opus cit*). How does *this wonderful, which seeks to become more acceptable* reconcile itself *with that outbidding of the wonderful, that taste for more and more striking miracles?* Renan does not trouble himself to inform us. For him, he tells us explicitly, "contradiction is of little consequence." In all his appreciations of the Gospel, he consults only his imagination. Behold a new proof of this:

According to him, the apostolic instructions, as the Gospel of St. Matthew presents them, are not from Jesus. "They *seem*," Renan continues, "in some respects to proceed from an ideal of the apostle formed after the model of Paul. Like Paul, the apostolic traveler is under cover, in the dangers of the route, by a divine protection; he plays with serpents and poisons do not hurt him. These two traits *appear* to make allusion to the adventure of Paul at Malta,

and to the miracle of Joseph Barsabas, which the daughters of Philip related to Papias."

What proves that the things have not passed as we always believed, and that the ideal of the apostle was not traced by our Lord, but made after the type of St. Paul? Here it is. Because Renan *does not believe* that the facts were such as the Gospel relates them. "The traditional saying," he claims, "always exaggerates the primitive trait. This is, in some sort, a mnemotechnic necessity, the memory retaining better strongly sharpened and hyperbolic words than measured sentences. Jesus was too profound a connoisseur of the souls for not knowing that rigor and exigency is the best manner to gain them and to keep them under-yoked. *We do not believe*, however, that He ever went to the excesses one attributes to Him, and the gloomy fire that animates the apostolic instructions *appears* to us to be partly a reflection of the feverish ardors of Paul."

The veracity of the Gospel depends, therefore, on the subjective impressions of Renan, and it is not the testimony of the Church or of the ancients that must settle for us the authority and credibility of St. Matthew, but what *appears* to the modern critic.

Thanks to this convenient proceeding, he takes the liberty to deny the best authenticated facts. He (Renan) opens his first chapter of the *Evangiles* by the following words: "Never did a people experience a deception similar to that which struck the Jewish people on the next day when, contrary to the most formal assurances of the divine oracles, the temple, which they supposed indestructible, crumbled down into the quick clear fire enkindled by the soldiers of Titus." How can one put forward similar errors, when everybody knows the famous prophecy of our Saviour about the ruin of Jerusalem, which is found not only in St. Matthew, but also in St. Mark and in St. Luke (Matt. xxiv; Mark xiii; Luke xxi. 5); when everybody remembers the famous words of Jesus: *Seest thou all these great buildings? There shall not be left a stone upon a stone that shall not be thrown down;* words reported by the Evangelist, who is according to Renan the most historical of all, St. Mark (Mark xiii. 2).

Renan assures with the same easy bearing that "the name Pharisee had until then (until after the ruin of the temple of Jerusalem), been taken by the Christians in good faith," although

Jesus in his discourses had constantly combated the Pharisees and their hypocrisy. Who does not know the parable of the pharisee and the publican (Luke xviii. 10–14), and the cutting words by which the Saviour stigmatizes these false devotees who took revenge on Him by causing Him to die, words which we read not only in St. Matthew, but also in the three other Evangelists?

Besides, since he does not himself attach a great importance to the exactitude of what he advances, Renan does not blame St. Matthew if he is not exact. «The accounts which the pseudo-Matthew adds to those of Mark are only a legend,» he says, but he has the merit of having preserved to us the discourses of Jesus. «This was more important than the biographical exactitude, and the Gospel of Matthew, taken all in all, is the most important book of Christianity, the most important book that was ever written.» Certainly, Catholics have not these commodious and unbridled theories on the veracity of a writer, and they are after another manner exacting on the literary probity and sincerity.

We just heard Renan calling the author of the first Gospel, the pseudo-Matthew. One of the most rash and most audacious negations of Renan, is that by which he denies to the Apostle the paternity of his work. We can easily understand that he wishes at any price to escape the authority of an eyewitness; but the more he is interested in upholding his error, the more we have a right to ask him for a reason. «The Apostle was dead a long time,» he says, «when the Gospel was composed.» Why? The true reason is, if it were not thus, he would have to admit whole Catholicity.

Renan partly admits this by adding: «Never has there been a book that was so little of an eyewitness.» Indeed, because St. Matthew was an eyewitness he cannot have written it. His testimony would be embarrassing; one could no longer deny the existence and the reality of the supernatural and miraculous.

The only two reasons which Renan brings forward to deny the authenticity and, consequently, the veracity of the first Gospel are the following (the first given in the text, the second in a note): «How, if our Gospel were from an Apostle, could we find therein such a defective sketch of the public life of Jesus?» What does this prove? Because St. Matthew conceived the plan of his Gospel different in a manner than Renan would have done, it follows that he has not written it or that he was deceived!

The second reason is not more serious than the first. «The work,» he says, «absolutely rejects such an author. Compare especially Matt. ix. 9; x. 3; Mark ii. 14; iii. 18; Luke v. 27; vi. 15; Acts i. 13.» We compare the texts indicated, and what do we find therein? That in Matt. ix. 9, St. Matthew, instead of calling himself Levi, as the two other Gospels call him in the parallel passages, calls himself Matthew! Behold the decisive argument for the critic. «The author of the first Gospel *has substituted* the name of Matthew for that of Levi, son of Alpheus; therefore, this author is not the apostle Matthew.» What a reasoning! In spite of the fact that whole antiquity attributed the first Gospel to St. Matthew, it cannot be from him, because the second and third Gospels once call Levi the one whom the first merely calls Matthew. Had St. Matthew not the right to omit his first name of Levi to preserve only that under which he was known as an apostle? St. Mark and St. Luke have, besides, also given to Levi (Mark ii. 14; Luke v. 27, 29) the name of Matthew (Mark iii. 18; Luke vi. 15 and Acts i. 13). Therefore, the first Gospel does not «substitute» one name for another; it simply chooses between two names.

Renan unceremoniously rejects the ancient testimonies. «The Ebionite Gospel,» he says, «admitted that the actual text of the first Gospel was the work of Matthew; but this is a modern authority and without value.» What must we think of a writer of the nineteenth century correcting a writer of the first or second century, because the latter is modern? He acts the same with Papias: «Papias really believes it to be the work of Matthew; but, about the end of fifty or sixty years, the means to disentangle such a complicated question *must have been* wanting.» But what is then so complicating in the question of knowing whether the first Gospel is of St. Matthew or not? Certainly, it would be worth while to know whether he was an apostle, and an eyewitness; all the Christians took an interest in this question, and we prefer to believe in the affirmation of a bishop who wrote fifty or sixty years afterwards, than in the critic who wishes to reform his testimony eighteen centuries later, because the «means to disentangle such a complicated question *must be* wanting to him.»

CHAPTER III

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. MARK

I Authenticity and Integrity of the Gospel According to St. Mark.— Tradition is unanimous in attributing the second Gospel to St. Mark, who was not an Apostle, but a disciple of the Apostles. He was, as is generally believed, the same as John Mark, a relative of St. Barnabas, who accompanied St. Paul in his first missions and then attached himself particularly to St. Peter. It is this Papias teaches us in particular, reporting what he held from Aristion or the Priest John: "Here is," he says, "what Aristion said: Mark, the interpreter of Peter, has written exactly that which has been said and done by Christ, as much as he retained in his memory (from the preaching of Peter), but he did not write in (a chronological) order; for he had neither heard the Lord, nor followed Him as His disciple; later on, as I said, he attached himself to Peter, who used to teach according to the circumstances, and not as one who intended a regular composition of the words (*logia*) of the Lord; hence Mark committed no fault, writing a part of them so, as he remembered them; for of one thing he took care, that is, to omit nothing of what he had heard, and not falsify anything in them" (Papias, in Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 39). All the ecclesiastical authors express themselves, as to the bottom, like Papias, and nobody has denied the authenticity of the Gospel of St. Mark before Schleiermacher in the nineteenth century. If, therefore, as it cannot be doubted, historic testimony is of authority on questions of this kind, it is certain that the second Gospel was written by St. Mark.

The intrinsic study of the Gospel according to St. Mark also plainly confirms what tradition teaches us about its origin and author. St. Matthew shows us particularly in Jesus Christ the Messiah, the son of David and of Abraham, the king of the chosen people; St. Luke makes us see in Him the Saviour and Redeemer of fallen mankind; St. Mark put especially in relief the Son of God (Mark i. 1) and the thaumaturgus. His account is in some sort only a development of the discourse pronounced by St. Peter (Acts x. 36–42): it is the same frame and the same plan.

But he enters into the most precise details to depict the events which he relates; he not only records the facts like the first Evangelist, but tells us that the crowd pressed around our Lord (Mark iii. 10; v. 21, 31; vi. 33; viii. 1), so that there was hardly any room to stand erect or to sit down (ii. 2; iii. 32; iv. 1), and that they had hardly the necessary time to eat (iii. 20; vi. 31), etc.

These pictures are thus full of life and movement. No gesture, no look of our Saviour escapes him, so to say: he represents Him to us as sitting down (iii. 5, 34; v. 32; x. 23; xi. 11) to speak to His disciples (ix. 34), embracing the children they brought to Him (ix. 35; x. 16), preceding His Apostles who followed Him with astonishment (x. 32), etc. No other Evangelist gives in such great abundance these picturesque details; more than the others, he names the persons and places, he determines the time and number. His language is not less characteristic. His Gospel is a rapid succession of living pictures which are not closely connected with one another and which are only joined by vague particles: "and," which returns continually, often connected with "again," "immediately," which is employed forty-two times. A certain number of Greek words we read solely and only once in his Gospel (v. 24, 31; vii. 37; ix. 3, 15, 17, 20, 36, 44, 46); he quotes Aramaic expressions, such as were pronounced by our Lord: *talitha oumi*, "young girl, arise" (v. 41); *ephphatha*, "be thou opened" (vii. 34); *Abba*, "father" (xiv. 36); he willingly preserves the Latin names of titles or places: centurion, *speculator*, legion, pretorium, etc.; he loves the diminutives; he has a certain number of figures which are peculiar to him, etc. His Greek is the least correct of the whole New Testament; it is full of Hebraisms and his phrases are almost always constructed in the Semitic form.

This unity of style and uniformity of tone establish the authenticity and integrity of the second Gospel. Ewald and Reuss have questioned, but without the least foundation, the authenticity of the first thirteen verses. All the testimonies are in their favor. They make, however, stronger objections against the conclusion (Mark xvi. 9–20); a great number of critics declare it to-day to be apocryphal.

The authenticity of the last twelve verses of this Gospel have been called into question, since they were already wanting in some

manuscripts, at the time of St. Jerome, as we see in his epistle to Hedibia, who asked him how the apparent contradiction between Mark xvi. 9, and Matthew xxviii. 1, is to be solved. St. Jerome answered that nearly the whole chapter is missing in the Greek manuscripts; according to Eusebius (*Quæstiones ad Marinun*) it was wanting even in most of the manuscripts of his time. Yet St. Irenaeus refers (*Adv. Haer.* iii. 10) expressly to the nineteenth verse of this chapter; moreover, if the last twelve verses be spurious, the Gospel would be without a proper conclusion. The old translations also contain these verses. The difficulty mentioned by St. Jerome, had brought them into some disrepute, so that they were first omitted in the public reading, and, consequently, also in some manuscripts entirely expunged.

II. Veracity of the Gospel According to St. Mark.—The second Gospel is generally the least attacked. Several critics even, like Renan, attribute to it a greater importance than that which belongs to it by right, in considering it the most ancient biography of the Saviour. Its exactitude and veracity are, however, contested on several points. It is thus that the author of the *Vie de Jesus*, mingling many errors with certain correct appreciations, writes as follows: "The Gospel of Mark is, at the bottom, authentic. It was at Rome that, according to all appearances, John Mark, the disciple, the interpreter of Peter, drew up the small writing of forty or fifty pages which was the first nucleus of the Greek Gospels. . . . Mark, it seems, had seen, as a child, something of the evangelical facts; we may believe that he had been at Gethsemane. . . . With wrong do they claim that the actual Mark does not correspond with what Papias says. . . . Nothing proves that his account was retouched. The account of the passion is authentic." (*Les Evangiles* p. 114–116.)

The Gospel according to St. Mark is referred by Renan to the year 76. We cannot determine its date for certain; but that of the year 76 is certainly too recent. St. Peter suffered martyrdom in the year 67, and the Gospel of his disciple must have been written before the death of the Apostle. All the judgments which Renan passes on St. Mark are thus a mixture of true and false.

"The logical distribution of matters is wanting therein," he says; "in some respects, the work is very incomplete. . . . On the contrary, the neatness, the detailed precision, the originality,

the picturesque, the biography, of this first account are not alike in the sequel. A sort of realism therein renders the trait heavy and harsh; the ideality of the character of Jesus suffers thereby; there are incoherences, inexplicable caprices. The first and third Gospel surpass by far that of Mark in regard to the beauty of the discourses, the happy disposition of the anecdotes; a number of wounding details have disappeared; but as a historic document, the Gospel of Mark has a great superiority. . . . The strong impression left by Jesus is found therein entirely. We see Him really alive and acting." (*Opus cit.*)

What is that realism which renders, in St. Mark, the trait heavy and harsh? The author sends us to Mark iii. 20, and there we read that the multitude surrounded Jesus and the Apostles in such a great number *so that they could not so much as eat bread.* What is there *heavy and harsh* in this; what is especially peculiar to the second Gospel? We find similar details in the three others.

Renan speaks also "of incoherences, of caprices, of wounding details." Which are they? He does not tell us, because he has nothing serious to allege in support of his accusations. He tries to establish, in a note, to the detriment of the other Gospels, what he calls "the great historical superiority" of the Gospel according to St. Mark. Among other things, he says: "Note especially in Mark the account of the death of John the Baptist, *the only absolutely historical page* which we find in all the Gospels combined." What does this affirmation mean? St. Matthew, together with St. Mark (Matt. xiv. 3–12; Mark vi. 17–29), is the only Evangelist that relates the death of St. John the Baptist. Now St. Matthew relates it exactly in the same manner, and, in great part, in the same terms as St. Mark, as we can easily convince ourselves by opening a concordance which reproduces in a parallel manner the Greek text of the two Gospels. In what, therefore, is St. Mark in this point historically superior to St. Matthew?

Renan adds again: "Remark the expression: *Son of Mary*" (vi. 3). Really we may ask whether the author of the *Origines du Christianisme* does not laugh at his readers. By what mystery is St. Mark, calling Jesus son of Mary, more historical than St. Matthew saying: *Is not his mother called Mary?* (Matt. xiii. 55. See also ii. 11) than St. Luke writing: *Mary, his mother?*

(Luke ii. 34.) Behold on what futilities rests the accusation brought up against St. Matthew and St. Luke.

However, according to Renan, not everything is historical in the account of St. Mark. *The spirit of Peter, somewhat narrow and dry*, he says, « is certainly the explanation of the *childish* importance which Mark attaches to miracles. The thaumaturgy, in his Gospel, has a peculiar character of heavy materialism, which reminds us of the reveries of magnetizers. The miracles fulfil themselves with difficulty, by successive phases. Jesus wrought them by means of Aramaic formulas, which have a cabalistic air. . . . It cannot be denied that Jesus goes forth from this Gospel, not as the sweet moralist whom we love, but as a terrible magician.»

If the miracles are real, it is difficult to establish that the importance which St. Mark,—as also all the other Evangelists and the Doctors of all times,—attaches to them, is «childish.» Is it childish to show, by the miracle, that one has supernatural power? Why should the miracle be so hateful to Rationalists, if it were a simple childishness?

Renan finds, moreover, a «heavy materialism» in the miracles reported by St. Mark. What is the meaning of this language? He is not ashamed to compare our divine Master with a magnetizer. What magnetizer did ever heal the sick in saying to them, as Jesus said to the paralytic: *Son, thy sins are forgiven thee?* (Mark ii. 5, 9.) And what heavy materialism is there in this healing and in these words as well as in a great number of other traits which equally show the falsity of Renan's assertions?

«The miracles,» he says again, «fulfil themselves with difficulty and by successive phases.» Miracles fulfilled, even with difficulty, and by successive phases, would they not be, nevertheless, a supernatural work? But our Lord has fulfilled none of his miracles with difficulty, and St. Mark gives us nowhere to understand anything of the kind. If the Saviour did not operate them instantaneously, then He had reasons for acting thus. Besides, the most of His miracles were wrought by means of a simple word, and the healing did not take place by successive phases. Jesus commands, for example, the man who had a withered hand: *Stretch forth thy hand, and he stretched it forth.* (iii. 5).

Finally it is completely false that Jesus wrought his prodigies «by means of Aramaic formulas, which have a cabalistic air.»

Renan knows as well and better than anybody that the words: *Talitha coumi* and *ephphatha* (Mark v. 41; vii. 34), to which he makes allusion here, are no magical formulæ. Jesus, wishing by His word to raise to life again the daughter of Jairus and to heal a deaf and dumb, naturally spoke his language, which was Aramaic. The Aramaic words, *talitha coumi* and *ephphatha* are not any more magical nor cabalistic than the English words: "Young girl, arise!" and "Be thou opened!" which are the translations thereof. It can be easily seen that St. Mark was bound to preserve to us the two words by which our Lord had wrought such great miracles as those of raising a dead to life again and of healing a deaf and dumb. But it is hard to understand how an Orientalist can abuse such simple and popular expressions to lower the actions of Jesus and the account of His historian. Renan knows very well that St. Mark, as well as St. Matthew, loves to report the Syro-Chaldaic words pronounced by the Saviour (Mark xiv. 36; xv. 34), and that it is impossible to suspect any mystery. Such appreciations have, therefore, nothing serious; they are phrases to make effect, unworthy of a critic who respects himself and who is a lover of truth.

CHAPTER IV

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. LUKE

I. Authenticity of the Gospel According to St. Luke.—Christian antiquity is unanimous in attributing to St. Luke the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. The Muratorian canon, drawn up A. D. 170, says: "Third, the book of the Gospel according to Luke, physician, after the ascension of Christ, when Paul had taken him for companion. . . . wrote in his name. He had not seen the Saviour in the flesh. He wrote as much as he could learn, beginning with the nativity of John." About 180, St. Irenæus wrote: "Luke, the companion of St. Paul, laid down in a book the Gospel preached by this Apostle" (*Adv. Haer.* iii. *Proaem.*); and the passages which he quotes thereof, prove that this Gospel is the same as that which we possess to-day. Some

years later, about 207, the works of Tertullian, particularly his refutation of Marcion, are filled with allusions to St. Luke. We know that Marcion himself had adopted a Gospel which was only that of St. Luke, except some curtailments. Now, this heretic had commenced to teach his errors about the year 130. St. Justin knew our third Gospel very well; although he does not mention the Evangelist by name, he often quotes him. The Ebionite author of the *Clementine Homilies*, about 170, reports several passages from St. Luke. Celsus makes allusion to it in speaking of the genealogy of Christ which goes back to the first man (In Origen, *Cont. Cels.* ii. 32). All these testimonies, emanating from pagans and heretics as well as from orthodoxes, establish the authenticity of our third canonical Gospel.

The style of St. Luke distinguishes itself from that of the other Evangelists by several peculiar characteristics. He makes use of a great number of Greek words, his vocabulary is richer; classic idioms are not rare in his writings, although they are mingled with Hebraisms; component words, very unfrequent in St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John, abound in St. Luke. Instead of the word *grammateis*, he employs that of *nomikoi* (six times) to designate the scribes, and instead of *rabbi* or *didascalos*, he says *epistates* (six times), to signify master, thus choosing terms more intelligible to the Gentiles. He often makes use of the neutral participle as substantive. Also the particles are as common with him as they are uncommon with the other Evangelists: thus the preposition *sun*, which we hardly meet in the other three Evangelists, we read seventy-five times in his Gospel and in the Acts. *Charis* (grace), which he frequently repeats (eight times in the Gospel), we find three times in St. John, never in St. Matthew nor in St. Mark. It is the same with several other expressions. In general, his Greek is superior to that of the other Evangelists. Although he has also made use of Hebrew idioms, and employs, for instance, the word *kardia*, "heart," as in the Old Testament, he seeks more Hellenic forms than the other sacred authors and tends more to approach the manner of speaking of the Greeks. Thus he calls Lake Genesareth *limnê*, "lake" (five times), instead of *thalassa*, "sea," the name which the other Evangelists give to it. Tradition tells us that he was a physician and we notice, indeed, in his Gospel that he knew exactly the technical expressions of Greek medi-

cine. Finally, Latin words are not unknown to him: denarius, legion, winding-sheet, colony.

II. Integrity of the Gospel According to St. Luke.— The integrity of the Gospel according to St. Luke is generally admitted. J. Bodin, Evanson, and Eichorn, contrary to all the ancient testimonies, have, however, contested the authenticity of the first two chapters, with the exception of the Preface, partly on account of their contents and partly on account of their style. Their doubts have remained without echo. Gersdorf has proven against them that we find in these chapters the peculiarities of language that characterize the writings of St. Luke. They have, it is true, a more pronounced Aramaic color than the rest of the Gospel, but this explains itself by the nature of the account and the sources he drew it from.

As to the wonderful facts of the childhood of the Saviour, one cannot allege them in order to reject as apocryphal the pages that contain them, otherwise we would have to condemn for the same reason all the passages of the Gospels which report miracles.

III. Veracity of the Gospel According to St. Luke.— The authenticity of St. Luke is so well established that few Infidels dare to deny it. "We are not permitted in similar questions," says Renan, "to express ourselves with certitude: nothing very grave, however, is opposed to our accepting St. Luke as author of the Gospel attributed to him. Luke was not famous enough that they could exploit his name with the view to give authority to a book, as was the case with the Apostles Matthew and John, later on with James, Peter, etc." Again he says: "The Gospel of St. Luke is a regular composition, founded on anterior documents. It is the work of a man, who selected, curtailed, and combined. The author of this Gospel is certainly the same as that of the Acts of the Apostles. Now, the author of the Acts seems to have been a companion of Paul, a title which becomes Luke perfectly." But rationalistic critics, in admitting the authenticity of St. Luke, do not consider it wrong to contest his testimony and to reproach him with errors and inexactitudes. The author of the *Origines du Christianisme*, for instance, believes himself permitted to treat the third Evangelist as he pleases: he goes so far as to accuse him of having invented facts. Consequently, according to him, St. Luke merits only a very restrained

confidence. He knew how to "make undergo," he says, "the words of Jesus the changes required for the needs of time." He is "more careful to defend positions than truth." "Did he have any scruple about inserting into his text accounts *of his own invention?* . . . Certainly not." "The true material is nothing for him." "Quite naturally this manner of composing entails in Luke . . . contradictions and incoherences."

Do we need to tell that these so grave accusations rest upon the most futile pretexts? Behold all that Renan can allege to justify them. He is obliged, first, to make avowals. "They had exaggerated," he says, "some of these errors. The image of the temple, conceived as an oratory, may be defended by Apocalypse xi. 1, 2." But he has yet the following grievances: "Concerning Emmaus, on the contrary, cannot," he says, "be justified in any typographical hypothesis." Here our ignorance is brought in as a proof of the pretended errors of St. Luke. We do not know for certain the site of Emmaus; how, therefore, can we prove that St. Luke was deceived, since we have only his own accounts to determine its site? Renan claims that "concerning Emmaus cannot be justified in any typographical hypothesis," and he expressly supposes that Kolonie occupies the site of the ancient Emmaus. "Kolonie," he says, "is about four miles from Jerusalem: now sixty stadia are about six miles." But, we repeat, the situation of Emmaus is problematic and still, to-day, a subject of lively controversy. Therefore, they cannot establish that St. Luke was deceived in fixing the distance from Jerusalem to Emmaus. Primitive local tradition placed the latter place at Emmaus-Nicopolis, the actual Amouas, and the first Christians of Palestine could certainly be well instructed on this point.

"Joanna (Luke viii. 3; xxiv. 10) is a feminine difficult to admit," Renan continues. How can a professor of Hebrew hold a similar language? Everybody knows that the feminine proper noun, Anna, exists in Hebrew, in both the Old and New Testaments, and all Hebraists know that Anna and Joanna are the same name, because they differ only by the abridged element from the name of Jehovah, understood in the first case, expressed in the second. Compare Nathan and Jonathan, Saphat and Josaphat or Sephatya, which are one and the same name under different forms. Hence, the error is not in Luke.

"In his account (Luke v. 19), Luke," Renan claims again, "supposes by *distraction* the roof covered with tiles, *consequently inclined*. The flat roofs are always terraced." The author of the *Evangiles* avows himself, one page before, that St. Luke knew the flat form of roofs of Palestine. Besides, in the passage incriminated, the Evangelist does not say at all that the roof of which he speaks was inclined. Renan makes him say this, because St. Luke remarks that they let down the sick: *dia tôn keramôn* (Luke v. 19), which does not mean *tiles*, properly speaking, but *bricks*. The expression is employed to designate a *roof*, because they made use of bricks to make the roofs, and in this sense it is employed, for example, by Aristophanes; but from this we cannot conclude in any manner that St. Luke wished to speak of an inclined roof, nor of a roof really made of bricks, although bricks might have been used to make terraces. To treat a metaphor as an error is not becoming of a serious critic. The context clearly proves, besides, that there is question of a terrace upon which they mounted by an independent stair. The stairway which leads to flat roofs of houses, in the East, is generally so disposed that one can have access to it without going through any apartment. At Jerusalem, where rain is not very rare, the terraces on the houses are often paved, to-day at least, to facilitate the flowing off of the water. They could, therefore, cover them with tiles and, consequently, they could remove the tiles. For certain repairs or labors, they do not hesitate to pierce the terraces (Mark ii. 4), as may be witnessed to this day in the Orient. All the details which the Gospel gives about the episode of the paralytic are, therefore, under cover against criticism.

Rationalists do not content themselves with reproaching St. Luke of imaginary inexactitudes, but accuse him of tendencies. According to the School of Tubingen, the third Gospel is a partisan work, a Paulinian writing. "The spirit which inspired Luke," says Renan, who made himself the echo of these accusations, "is much easier to determine than that which inspired Mark and the author of the Gospel according to St. Matthew. The two latter Evangelists keep themselves neutral and take no part in the quarrels that rend the Church. The partisans of Paul and those of James might also have adopted them. Luke, on the contrary, is a disciple of Paul, a moderate disciple, certainly, full of respect for Peter, even for James; but a decided partisan for adopting, into

the Church, the pagans, Samaritans, and publicans." As if the Gospel of St. Matthew, written by a publican, and relating that a publican had become one of the Twelve Apostles, was not as partisan for adopting the publicans into the Church! So also St. Mark, who equally relates the same fact.

The error of the School of Tubingen is, however, not without consequence. The Infidels abuse the tendency which they unjustly attribute to St. Luke in order to attack the veracity of his accounts. They call into question certain facts which they imagine as having been invented for the need of the cause, as the mission of the seventy disciples for instance: "The universalism [of St. Luke]," says De Wette, "breaks out especially in the mission of the seventy disciples (x. 1) who, just like the Twelve, had been destined for the seventy nations of the earth." Renan hastened to borrow this argument from his ordinary inspirators. "Aside from the Twelve, Luke creates by his own authority seventy disciples, to whom Jesus gave a mission which, in the other Gospels, is reserved to the Twelve alone. . . . Luke divides among the Twelve and seventy the apostolic instructions which, in the collections of the *logia*, formed only one sole discourse addressed to the Twelve. This figure of seventy or seventy-two had, besides, the advantage of corresponding with the number of the nations of the earth, as the figure twelve corresponded with the tribes of Israel. There was an opinion, in fact, that God had divided the earth among seventy-two nations."

This opinion is not found in the canonical books, but in the apocryphal literature, rejected by the Church and posterior to the Gospel according to St. Luke, in the *Recognitions* and in the false *Clementine Homilies*. But, be it as it may as to its origin, if it had been known to St. Luke, it could have been thus equally known to our Lord. Who, therefore, has taught Infidels that the mission of the seventy did not come from Jesus, but from St. Luke? Nobody. It is an invention of their imagination.

Not content with having recourse to the so-called Paulinian tendencies of St. Luke to attack the credibility of his accounts, they have tried to form a weapon against him from his style and to represent him as sacrificing truth for literary effect. Renan, with a disdain very ill becoming in so grave a matter, wishes to teach us that he is disposed to pardon a good deal in Luke, on account of his merit

as a writer. He says: "A wonderful popular sentiment, a fine and touching poetry, the clear and pure sound of a quite argentine soul, something disengaged from the earth and exquisite, hinder us from thinking of those spots, repeated wants of logic, and singular contradictions. The importune judge and the widow, the friend of the three loaves of bread, the unfaithful steward, the prodigal child, the pardoned sinner, many combinations peculiar to Luke, appear at first, to positive minds, as little conforming with scholastic reason and straight morality; but these apparent weaknesses, which resemble the amiable failings of the thought of a woman, are moreover a trait of truth, and remind us of the emotional tone, now expiring, now panting, of the quite feminine (!) movement of the Word of Jesus, clouded by imagery and sentiment, more than by reasoning . . .

"The Gospel of Luke is the most literary of the Gospels. Everything therein reveals a broad, sweet, wise, moderate, and sober mind, and rational in the irrational. His exaggerations, improbabilities, and inconsequences adhere to the very nature of the parable and form its charm. Matthew rounded the somewhat dry outlines of Mark; Luke does more — he writes, he shows a true understanding of composition. His book is a beautiful account, well connected, at once Hebraic and Hellenic, joining the emotion of the drama with the serenity of the idyl. Everything therein is laughing, crying, or chanting; all over there are tears and canticles; it is the hymn of the new people, the *hosanna* of the little and humble introduced into the kingdom of God. A spirit of holy infancy, joy, fervor, and an evangelical sentiment in its first originality spread over the whole legend a tincture of incomparable sweetness. . . . It is the most beautiful book in existence. The pleasure which the author must have had in writing it will never be sufficiently understood." (*Les Evangiles*, p. 282.)

Renan attributes to St. Luke, in a part of the preceding lines, his own thoughts, preoccupations, and manner of feeling and seeing. Everybody is somewhat disposed to judge others according to himself; but, truly, Renan is this more than anybody. To attribute, as he does, a preponderant *rôle*, in the third Gospel, to make a "literary effect," "to the scruple of a delicate taste" "to the art of the arranger which was never carried further" (*Opus cit.*), is this not surpassing all limits? Certainly, the Evangelists were far from having literary pretensions. With what eyes must

he not have read them to discover such a thing in their writings? Not all the readers are capable of giving an account of the exactitude of certain affirmations; but who is the one, having read the Gospel, that will not recognize the falsity of the latter? Will it, therefore, be wrong for us if we apply to Renan himself what he falsely applies to St. Luke: "The true material is nothing for him," all that has any value for him is the literary effect. Even Renan himself admits this in the passages we have reported. All his books contain pieces of parade, where his attempt to make a literary effect is palpable. For him, there is no sin more unpardonable than that of sluggishness and heaviness in style. He often repeats himself, and with a ridiculous persistence. Did he not imagine to make St. Luke share that horror and in order to explain thereby how the Evangelist arrived at "not admitting the *fasces* of the *logia* constituted before him or even to divide them in a violent manner"? To believe him, "a scruple of his delicate taste made him find these artificial and *somewhat heavy* groupings." But, if St. Luke was such a skillful literary artist, since "the art of the arranger was never carried further," since "nothing equals the skillfulness with which he cuts into pieces the anterior collections, creates framings to the disaggregated *logia*, enchases them, inserts them like small brilliants into delicious accounts," why, instead of suppressing a part of these *fasces*, did he not always allege the heaviness in dividing and disaggregating them with art? Moreover, according to Renan, the author of the Gospel according to St. Matthew had also a pronounced taste. His Gospel, he tells us, "offers corrections of taste and tact. . . . Particularities æsthetically weak . . . are suppressed." He attributes to him also "certain small abilities of style." How, therefore, could he insert in his work these sluggish and heavy pieces, whose "digestion is not completed" and which were so greatly displeasing to St. Luke? The author of the *Origines du Christianisme* does not trouble himself about these contradictions.

They have made the attempt to bring forward against the authority of St. Luke more serious arguments than those we have reported, and have maintained that he committed grave historical errors, which we can easily establish, they say, in checking his account by profane authors. The principal of these grievances is drawn from what St. Luke relates of the census of Quirinius and

of the journey which the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph made to Bethlehem on this occasion. This objection merits to be discussed more at length.

IV. The Census of Quirinius.— St. Luke teaches us, at the beginning of his Gospel, that Jesus Christ was born at Bethlehem in the time when the census was taken in Judea, under the government of Quirinius, legate of Syria (Luke ii. 1–2). The enemies of revelation claim that this census has never been made and that by an anachronism the Evangelist says that Quirinius was the legate of Syria when the Saviour came into this world.

The most of the Rationalists and even a great number of ancient critics maintain that Quirinius became governor of Syria only after the year 5 of our era, that is, a few years after the birth of Jesus Christ, born, as St. Matthew teaches us, before the death of Herod, which took place in the year 4, before our era. Listen to what Reuss has to say in regard to this subject:—

"We know very positively that there was under the reign of Augustus a prefect of Syria called P. Sulpicius Quirinius; we know also that this magistrate, under whose command Judea was placed, when Augustus incorporated it into the empire, must have preceded a *census*, which had for its object to regulate the establishment of the revenues according to the principles of the Roman administration; we also know that this census, as the *first* act of the kind in this province and a clear sign of the end of its independence, provoked violent rumors and bloody insurrections, the consequences of which made themselves felt long afterwards. They remembered it for a long time, so well that our author finds occasion to mention it a second time (Acts v. 37). These facts, which form the nucleus of the present account, being above all dispute, what will be the result of the chronological fixation of the birth of Jesus according to our author? The census of Quirinius took place in the year of Rome 760, the year 6 of the Christian era. . . . The account of the first Gospel implying facts according to which Jesus would have been born before the death of Herod (Matt. ii. 1), which took place, according to the rectified chronology of the moderns, in the year 4, before the commencement of the popular era, it follows that there is a difference of ten years between the two accounts (that of St. Luke and that of St. Matthew). . . . We have,

therefore, two contradictory calculations in regard to the birth of Jesus." (*Histoire evangelique*, pp. 141–142.)

The contradiction does not exist, and all that St. Luke tells us is exact and historical. He teaches, first, that the Emperor Augustus published an edict ordaining to take a census of the whole Roman empire. Reuss maintains that the census took place only when Judea was incorporated into the empire, ten years at least after the birth of our Saviour, and as this census referred especially to the kingdom of Herod, he denies thereby even that it was made in virtue of a general edict.

Several commentators, struck by the fact that Quirinius had proceeded in the enumeration related by Josephus (Ant. Jud. XVII., ii. 4), in the year 6 of our era, and that we do not find in the ancient authors any trace of an analogous operation made by the same Quirinius under Herod, have believed that St. Luke wished to distinguish between the census executed under Herod and that which took place about ten years later under Quirinius, and, according to them, it is on account of a false version of the text of the Evangelist that they admitted a first census made by Quirinius; we have to translate: "This census was made before Quirinius became legate of Syria;" and not: "this first enumeration was made under Quirinius, legate of Syria." The Greek word *prôte* has not, in this passage of the Gospel, the positive, but comparative meaning of *before*. This is what we may call the philological interpretation. It is rejected in the name of grammar by various commentators and historians. Although, strictly speaking, it may be possible, in every case we have to admit that it does not appear natural; it cannot be seen why St. Luke should have made allusion in this passage to the census of the year 6 of our era, if Quirinius had nothing to do with the facts he relates. It is, besides, useless, for it is historically certain, against Reuss and those whose opinion he quotes, that Augustus had given orders to enroll the whole Roman empire, in the epoch of which St. Luke speaks. This fact is attested by several ancient authors, the most, it is true, little known, but whose testimony is nevertheless unobjectionable.

They have made the attempt to weaken the force of the arguments which establish that Augustus caused the enrollment of the whole empire, in saying, as Reuss does, that the imperial edict

could not apply to Judea during the reign of Herod, before it was incorporated into the empire. This objection is without foundation. Undoubtedly, Augustus did not wish to subject the Jews, under the reign of Herod, to a direct taxation, but he wished to prepare the ways for the union of Judea and know exactly what were the resources, in men and money, of the kingdoms that were not his allies. Tacitus tells us explicitly that the Emperor had drawn up a *Breviary of the Empire* which enumerated all his allies (*Annales* i. 11). Consequently, he could know them only by a census. This census was, therefore, made in the allied kingdoms and, consequently, also in Palestine.

It did not take place, at least under the administration of Quirinius, continue the Infidels, for this Roman functionary was placed at the head of the province of Syria only after the deposition of Archelaus, the successor of Herod. A great number of orthodox commentators, even among those who acknowledged that a first census had been made in Judea some years before our era, were so struck at the silence of the ancient authors, and in particular of Josephus, about a first legation of Quirinius, that, indeed, they believed that this personage had presided over the census only in the quality of extraordinary embassador of Augustus. But, henceforth, everybody will be forced to admit with St. Luke the double legation of Quirinius in Syria, for this is proven by an epigraphic monument preserved in the Museum of the Lateran at Rome. And behold its contents: *P. Sulpicius p. f. Quirinius cos pr. pro consul. Cretam et Cyrenas provinciam obtinuit pr. pr. divi Augusti Syriam et Phœnicen optinens bellum gessit cum gente Homonadensium quæ interfecerat Amyntam regem. qua. redacta. in. potestatem imp. Cæsaris Augusti. populique Romani Senatus dis immortalibus supplicationes. binas. ob. res. frospere gestas et ipsi. ornamenta. triumphalia decrevit pro consul. Asiam. provinciam. obtinuit legatus pr. pr. divi. Augusti. iterum. Syriam. et. Phœnicen optinuit.*

Translation: *P. Sulpicius Quirinius, son of Publius, consul . . . pretor. He obtained as proconsul the province of Crete and of Cyrenaic . . . propretor legate of the divine Augustus of the province of Syria and of Phœnicia; he made war against the nation of the Homonades who had killed Amyntas, its King. This nation having been reduced under the power of the divine Augustus and of the Roman people, the senate decreed to the*

immortal gods two supplications for the success which he had obtained, and awarded to himself the ornaments of the triumph. He obtains as proconsul the province of Asia and as propretor legate of the divine Augustus, for the second time, the provinces of Syria and of Phœnicia. (See also pp. 232–234.)

CHAPTER V

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO ST. JOHN

I. Authenticity of the Gospel According to St. John.— The fourth Gospel distinguishes itself from the three synoptics by its chronological order and by the choice of the material. There are many parts that are peculiar to it and, aside from a small number of sections, it is only in the account of the Passion that the author occupies himself with subjects already treated by the other Evangelists. He passes entirely the history of the childhood of Jesus, of which St. Matthew and St. Luke speak; he is the only one that acquaints us with the travels of our Saviour on the occasion of the Jewish festivals. Such being the plan of his Gospel, we can hardly help acknowledging that his object was to complete the three synoptics and that he supposes them known. He, therefore, wrote the last of all. This is what tradition confirms.

The ancient testimonies in favor of the authenticity of the Gospel according to St. John are decisive. Bretschneider is the first, among the moderns, who seriously attacked it in the name of criticism, in 1820, but it was, he assures us, with the object of provoking a deeper study of the question, and he declared later on that he regarded the doubts which he had emitted as victorious. Although, since that time, Strauss and the School of Tubingen expressed themselves against the apostolic origin of the fourth Gospel, the traditional belief has not been shaken. It rests, indeed, upon the most solid proofs. Behold some of them:

We find already textual quotations from St. John in the writings of the beginning of the second century, in the Epistles of St. Ignatius of Antioch (*Ep. ad Rom.*, vii.; *Ad Trall.*, viii.; *Ad Philad.*, vii.). St. Polycarp reproduces literally a passage from the first Epistle of St.

John (I. John iv. 2, etc., in St. Polycarp, *Phil.*, vii.), an Epistle which is justly regarded as the Preface of his Gospel. The works of St. Justin are filled with ideas from St. John: he calls Jesus Christ the Word of God, the Unique, the Living Water; he speaks of the Incarnation and of the [spiritual] birth. Meliton of Sardes, about 150, reports various passages from St. John (John vi. 54; xii. 24; xv. 5), in prefacing them with the words: "The Christ says in the Gospel" (In Pitra, *Spicilegium Solesmense*). It is also known to Athenagoras (*Leg. pro Christ.*, 10), Apollinarius (*Fragm. Chron. Pasch.*) Polycrates, bishop of Ephesus (In Eusebius, *H. E.* iii., v. 24), to St. Theophilus of Antioch (*Ad Autolyc.* ii. 22), to St. Irenæus (*Adv. Haer.* iii. 11, 3, 6). The *Clementine Homilies* speak thereof, in the middle of the second century, in terms which show the high esteem in which they already held this Gospel at that time. About the year 170, the canon of Muratori expressly attributes the fourth Gospel to the Apostle St. John.

Let us add here the testimony of the *Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles*, known only since 1883. We do not read therein textually any passage of the fourth Gospel, but, like in several other ancient writings, we recognize, in the language of the author, the trace of the influence of St. John. Let us quote in particular what the author of the *Didache* says of the Eucharist: "As to the Eucharist, you shall give thanks thus: First for the Chalice: We give thanks to Thee, our Father, for the holy vine of Thy servant, David, which Thou didst make known to us through Jesus, Thy son. To Thee be glory forever and ever!—For the Bread broken: We give thanks to Thee, our Father, for the life and the science which Thou didst make known to us through Jesus, Thy son. To Thee be glory forever and ever! Like [the grains] of this bread broken and disseminated upon the mountains and have been gathered to form one whole, that thus Thy Church may be gathered from the extremities of the earth in Thy kingdom, because to Thee is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ forever and ever!" This manner of speaking, which we also find in the acts of thanksgiving that end the spiritual banquet, reminds us quite of St. John, and the expressions which we read almost solely in this apostle's Gospel: "Jesus Christ, called here the vine of David," says in St. John: "I am the vine." The prayer for the union of the members of the Church seems to be only an echo of the wonderful discourse of Our Lord at the Last Supper, such as St.

John has preserved to us. It is through the Saviour, this Evangelist says, that we also receive life. The same tone of the prayer of thanksgiving, as well as its object, is that of the prayer which Jesus made for His own after the Last Supper.

Thus the entire primitive Church gives testimony in favor of the authenticity of St. John. The canon of Muratori attests the faith of the Roman Church in 170; St. Theophilus of Antioch, that of the Church of Syria in 181; St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, about the same time, that of Asia Minor, whence he originated and where the Gospel was composed, and that of Gaul where he was bishop. Shortly afterwards, in Egypt, the learned Clement of Alexandria, enumerates the four canonical Gospels and particularly that of St. John, which is commented a few years later by his disciple, Origen; between 193 and 217, Tertullian also quotes it at Carthage, in Africa. Hence there is no part of the Church where the Gospel of St. John was not received in the second century as the work of this Apostle, and from that time the ancient Italic, which contains it, is spread in the whole Latin Church, like the Syriac Peschito, which is also from the second century and also contains it, is spread among the Christians of Syria. *In usu est nostrorum*, "they make use of it among us," says Tertullian (*Adv. Prax.*, 5), in speaking of the old Vulgate, expressions which suppose a general usage and going back several years.

Heretics themselves join with the orthodox to attest, after their fashion, the antiquity and authenticity of St. John. The polemics of Tertullian against Marcion prove that in this period the fourth Gospel was acknowledged as canonical and as the work of the well-beloved disciple. Valentinus does not dare to question the authenticity of the work of St. John; he only seeks through allegorical explanations to render it favorable to his Gnosticism. His disciple, Heracleon, does the same, and writes in this sense a commentary, of which Origen has preserved to us numerous extracts. Basilides, in 125, quotes St. John, in saying: "What is written in the Gospels." Theodotus and Ptolemy equally quote him. The chief of the sect of the Encratites, Tatian, reports passages thereof (John i. 3–5) and composed, about 170, a harmony of our four canonical Gospels, which for a long time they believed to be lost, but which we know now through versions: it commences with the prologue of St. John. The *Philosophoumena*, discovered in 1842, and published for the first time in 1851, abound in

quotations from St. John drawn from heretical writings. The pagan Celsus also knew our four Gospels and he expressly mentions the nails with which our Lord was fastened to the cross and of which there is question only in St. John.

The testimony of some of the heretics mentioned by the *Philosophoumena* goes back to the beginning of the second century, consequently shortly after the composition of the fourth Gospel. Its authenticity cannot, therefore, be questioned by any man of good faith, if he is not blinded by partisan spirit.

The intrinsic examination of the fourth Gospel confirms thus the testimony of tradition: it is the work of an Apostle of the Saviour who saw with his own eyes the facts which he relates, *i.e.*, of St. John. To the proofs we just read, we could add several similar ones if it were necessary; but it will be sufficient to remark that St. John has a manner of writing that is peculiar to him and which is, so to speak, the seal of all his compositions.

The style of St. John is characterized by simplicity and a certain ease. His vocabulary is not abundant: he often repeats the same expressions and phrases; he ordinarily employs, however, the proper noun. The distinctive features of his language are the following: He redoubles *Amen*, "indeed" (twenty-five times at the beginning of a discourse or at a new subject). Generally, he designates the time by the expression: "after this" (John ii. 12; iii. 22; etc.). The "multitude" is always designated by the singular, except once, whilst the other Evangelists employ mostly the plural, "the multitudes." The particle "therefore," is frequently employed as conjunction; we meet with it in the fourth Gospel alone as often as in the three others together. Certain verbal formulæ are peculiar to him. But what forms the principal originality of the language of the well-beloved disciple, is the use of quite a considerable number of terms which express the fundamental ideas of his theology: the Word, the light and darkness, the truth, the love, the world (seventy times), the only son of God, the Paraclete, the life eternal, etc.

In spite of all the reasons brought forward, rationalistic criticism rejects the authenticity of the fourth Gospel. It claims that the testimonies in its favor are insufficient. That they are not numerous in the second century, this is true, undoubtedly, but we must not be surprised at this, because the literary monuments of this time that came down to us until now are very scarce. How-

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ever, in spite of their small number, we discover therein manifest traces of the influence of the Gospel of St. John; it appears particularly in the Epistles of St. Ignatius (*Ep. ad Rom.* vii.; *Ad Philad.* vii.) and in the letter of St. Polycarp (*Ep. ad Philad.* vii.); it is as certain as that of the principal Epistles of St. Paul whose authenticity nobody contests. Besides, the ancient testimonies do not delay to become positive and categorical, as we have shown, and all suppose an already acquired belief. The language of St. Irenæus, for instance, explains itself only in so far as it is the echo of his time; and since in this epoch they attributed to St. John the fourth Gospel, it follows that they attributed it to him before. "To deny this," Lightfoot says correctly, "would be denying that a knotty oak with large branches counts already several years, because circumstances hindered it to establish sooner its existence" (*The Supernatural Religion*). Reuss himself does not hesitate to admit this. (Cf. *La theologie johannique*, pp. 92–93.)

II. Integrity of the Gospel According to St. John.— The remarks we have made on the style of St. John will serve to establish the integrity of his Gospel. They have denied the authenticity of the last chapter, which is, so to epeak, a supplement or appendix. Hugo Grotius was the first that attacked it, and he has had numerous followers. But all the manuscripts of the Gospels protest against the assertion of negative criticism, for they all contain the final chapter.

The most contested passage of St. John's Gospel is the history of the adulterous woman (John vii. 53; viii. 11). Many critics reject it as an interpolation, because we do not read it in a great number of important manuscripts, such as the Codex Sinaiticus, the Codex Vaticanus, the Codex Alexandrinus, the Codex Regius of Paris, which are of the fourth or fifth centuries, and many others. It is also wanting in most of the versions: the Syriac of Cureton, the Peschito, and the translation of Philoxenus, in the Gothic version of Ulfilas, in the greater part of the Coptic manuscripts, in some Armenian manuscripts, and in the best manuscripts of the Italic version. The Greek Fathers, who have commented on the Gospel of St. John, omit this passage in their commentaries: Origen, Apollinarius, Theodore of Mopsuestia, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. John Chrysostom, St. Basil, etc. Of the Latin Fathers, neither Tertullian

nor St. Cyprian knew it. Finally, the style of this piece differs from the style of St. John; we read therein, for instance, "all the people," instead of "the multitude," etc., and it is hardly connected with what preceeds and follows.

We have to acknowledge that all these arguments have some weight; however, they are not sufficient to reject the authenticity of this evangelical passage. Several uncial manuscripts contain it, among others the manuscript D of Cambridge, which is only from the sixth century, it is true, but represents much more ancient copies which we can make to go back to the second century. We find it also in more than three hundred minuscule manuscripts. Six evangelistaries and other manuscripts indicate that it must be read on the feasts of St. Pelagia, of St. Theodora, of St. Eudoxia, and of St. Mary the Egyptian. As to the versions, the Latin Vulgate, the Arabic, Ethiopic, Slavonic, Anglo-Saxon translations, contain the history of the adulterous woman, as also the most of the Armenian manuscripts. The Apostolic Constitutions quote it in the third century, as well as the Synopsis of the Scriptures which carries the name of St. Athanasius, St. Pacian, and in the fourth century, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and many others. As to the Greek Fathers and writers who do not mention it, Origen, Theodore of Mopsuestia, St. John Chrysostom, we have to remark that volume xviii. of the *Commentaries of St. John*, by Origen, where this controverted passage ought to be found, is lost. We also possess only very incomplete fragments of the exegetical explanations of Theodore of Mopsuestia and of Apollinarius. St. John Chrysostom has not explained the fourth Gospel in a consecutive manner. No Greek Father positively rejects this piece; Euthymius alone appears to be inclined to do this. The silence of St. Basil, of Tertullian, and of St. Cyprian prove nothing, because they have not given an explanation of St. John.

As to the intrinsic arguments they allege against this account, they are far from being conclusive. We read therein, undoubtedly, some words which we do not read elsewhere in the fourth Gospel, but it is the same in several other chapters; the style in reality is that of St. John, and it is false, moreover, that the episode does not belong to the place where it is found, as is even admitted by Rationalists. "This narrative," says Hilgenfeld, "cannot be separated from the context. If we suppress it, we cannot explain the word of Jesus: *I*

judge not any man (viii. 15) and neither can we give a reason for His presence in the temple" (viii. 20). There is, besides, a unanimous voice to acknowledge the historical character of the piece.

The character of this episode is sufficient to explain its omission in a certain number of manuscripts. The monk Nicon says explicitly that the Armenians had suppressed it, under the pretext "that it was hurtful to many hearers."

III. Veracity of the Gospel According to St. John.— Rationalistic critics who reject the authenticity of St. John have for object to deny its veracity. To show that the author of the fourth Gospel has not been an eye-witness of the facts which he relates, and that, consequently, his testimony is without value, they maintain that a Galilean fisherman could not write as the Evangelist has written; neither Jesus nor John had nor could have the knowledge which is attributed to them. "It is difficult," says Strauss, "to attribute to the Apostle the knowledge of Alexandrine speculation and more particularly Philonian, which the Evangelist possesses. In the year 62, he wrote the Apocalypse which recalls to mind neither the Gospel nor the Alexandrine philosophy. That an aged man had afterwards the curiosity to inquire about ideas so foreign to his ancient horizon, and the gift to make them his own and to produce them with originality, the ensemble and the charm which distinguish the Gospel, this has not a shadow of probability" (*Neues Leben Jesu*). The author is, therefore, a Jew of Alexandria or at least familiarized with Alexandrine ideas; he has a degree of more elevated culture than St. Paul himself; his Greek is purer than that of the synoptic Gospels; his conceptions, like his language, differ from those of St. Matthew, of St. Luke, and St. Mark. The theories which he develops about the Trinity and the Word pre-suppose, by their precision and exposition, the labor of two generations of thinkers. This teaching is, therefore, not that of Jesus, no more than that of St. John: the fourth Gospel does not offer to us a true picture of the Saviour; it is not a biography, it is not a real history, it is a fiction of Christian imagination. "As to the Gospel of John," says Strauss, in ending, "the conclusion of modern criticism is to see therein, only vain appearances in the notable additions with which it enriches the foundation of evangelical history: all it contains historical was drawn from the ancient Gospels; all it gives more is fictive or arbitrarily transformed. This judgment has all the chances of remaining without appeal."

Those who make these objections suppose without the least proof that St. John did not receive any intellectual culture. As a child he could have received some instruction, for his parents appear to have enjoyed a certain ease. Then, when he became a disciple of Jesus, he was still young and, consequently, susceptible of being formed, and he was certainly in a good school. Later on, he lived in Asia Minor, which was an important intellectual center, where he could perfect himself in the Greek language. Finally, in spite of all they may say, it is not his doctrine which he exposes, but that of his Master, so that, without taking into account the divine inspiration, we can understand that he could write the fourth Gospel, although he had been at first a fisher of Galilee, because he was the disciple of predilection of the divine Master, who revealed to him His secrets and prepared him to become the eagle of the Evangelists.

They insist especially on the doctrine of the Word and on the Christology of the fourth Gospel to refuse its composition to St. John, but without reason, for his teaching is, at the bottom, that of St. Paul. The doctrine of the *Logos* is not derived at all, as they have alleged, from the theories of Plato and of Philo. "It is in the writings of the Old Testament," says Mgr. Freppel, "that we have to look for the antecedents of that great page of Christian metaphysics," which forms the prologue of the fourth Gospel. Even this is acknowledged by many Rationalists. (Cf. Ed. Reuss, *La theologie johannique*, pp. 109–110.)

As to the knowledge of Greek which the author of the first Gospel had, it explains itself without difficulty by his long stay in Asia Minor. Forced to speak this language, he ended by becoming familiar with it. He did not possess it, however, so as to forget his foreign origin; St. Luke wrote it better than he; we always recognize the Jew under his borrowed garment: his syntax is Semitic; he does not know how to make periods like St. Paul, who had received in his country, at Tarsus, an Hellenic education; his constructions are Hebrew, his style keeps a well characterized Oriental color; he has not laid off completely, in this respect, the old man, and the native of Palestine always looks through the Hellenist writer. The language of the last of our Gospels is, therefore, such as could be written only by St. John.

The principal objection which they try to bring up against the veracity of St. John is based on the essential difference which

they pretend to discover between the picture of Jesus Christ traced by the synoptics and that of the fourth Gospel. Bretschneider, Strauss, and other adversaries of St. John have insisted a good deal on this. Renan, summing up their argumentation, writes: "On the one hand, this Gospel presents to us a sketch of the life of Jesus which differs considerably from that of the synoptics. On the other hand, he puts into the mouth of Jesus discourses whose tone, style, behavior, and doctrines have nothing in common with the *Logia* reported by the synoptics. In this second respect, the difference is such that we have to make our choice in a decided manner. If Jesus spoke as Matthew tells us, He could not speak as John tells us. Between the two authorities, no critic has hesitated nor will hesitate. . . . This does not mean to say that there are not in the discourses of John wonderful flashes of lightning, traits which really come from Jesus. But the mystic tone of these discourses corresponds in nothing to the character of the eloquence of Jesus such as we imagine it according to the synoptics. A new spirit has breathed, the gnosis has already commenced; the Galilean era of God's kingdom is finished; the hope of the near coming back of the Messiah is deferred; one enters the aridities of metaphysics, into the darkness of abstract dogma. The spirit of Jesus is not there, and if the son of Zebedee had really traced these pages, we would have to suppose that he had forgotten, in writing them, the Lake of Genesareth and the charming entertainments which he had heard on its shores." (*Vie de Jesus*, 13th edit. pp. 59–60.)

To answer these objections, we have to remark, in the first place, that if the differences which they pretend to discover between the last Evangelist and the first three were so great as they claim, Rationalists would not have on this account the right to conclude that St. John is not the author of the fourth Gospel, as Reuss has correctly remarked. He says: "Is it then necessary, when there is question of different authors, to conclude from the diversity of the ideas, even shades in the conception of a theory, to an absolute priority of the one? Is it then impossible that in the same period and especially among different surroundings, also different conceptions may produce themselves, the one more advanced, more elevated, newer than the others? Have there never been men who were ahead of their contemporaries, and after whom more behindhand or at least more ancient and

more popular theories and beliefs continued to exist and even affirmed themselves in literature? . . . The theology of the fourth Gospel will, therefore, not be sufficient in itself to determine the epoch of its composition." (*Opus cit.* pp. 80–81).

We do not admit that there is a contradiction between the fourth Gospel and the synoptics: between the latter and the former there are divergences, but no opposition. Very soon we shall have to examine the divergences of the Evangelists, whose reality we are far from contesting. It will be sufficient, therefore, to explain here in a few words the shades which distinguish St. John from the other Evangelists. Rationalistic criticism exaggerates these differences, and sees all over antilogies in order to establish more easily its thesis, but it is at the expense of truth. The portrait of the Saviour traced by His four historians is in foundation the same, only the last among them completes the work of his predecessors. The former depicted especially the exterior, national, and popular side of Jesus, according to the impression He made upon the mass; the well-beloved disciple, on the contrary, endowed with a more penetrating mind and more inclined to contemplation, formed besides by the Saviour Himself, preferred to show us the soul of his Master in all that it had most intimate; hence the height of his views and the elevation of his teaching. Who does not know that the same professor produces upon the scholars assembled around him very different results? Each one takes from his lessons what he is capable of gathering therefrom. Although the teaching is the same, the harvest is very different, because the faculties of the hearers are also different. Certain rapid views slip over certain souls without leaving any trace therein, whilst they produce a deep impression upon other minds differently endowed or constituted. There is not one single professor who has not often had this experience and who has not met with refractory intellects to parts of his teaching, whilst others seized it with as much avidity as profit. It is thus that St. John assimilated to himself, so to speak, in the doctrine of the divine Master, what it had more metaphysical and more transcendent, whilst the other Evangelists have preserved to us what was at the bearing of all and what struck the most, the common of men, as, for instance, the parables, which are absent in St. John and which occupy such a beautiful page in the

three synoptics. Besides, we must not forget that one of the objects of the last of the Evangelists having been to complete the works of those that had written before him, he did not need to repeat what they already had related. Finally, it is impossible, in spite of the differences, not to recognize in the discourses of Jesus reported by St. John and in which they point out especially what they call his antagonism with the synoptics, it is impossible, we say, not to recognize the same spirit, the same foundations of teaching and doctrine. We have, therefore, no motive to suspect the veracity of the last of our Gospels. Tradition teaches us that it was written by an eye-witness, whose testimony is true, as the last chapter thereof affirms; we ought to accept it as such.

CHAPTER VI

THE DIVERGENCES OF THE GOSPELS

GENERAL EXPLANATION OF THE DIVERGENCES OF THE GOSPELS

After having examined successively each of the four Gospels and established their authenticity, integrity, and veracity, we have to discuss certain difficulties which are common to all or which result from the comparison among one another. That which presents itself first, the best known and most striking, is derived from the divergences which we remark among the four accounts of the life of our Lord.

Since the first centuries of the Christian era, they have noticed the apparent discordancies which exist among the four Gospels and have tried to bring them into harmony. Rationalists assume an air as if they were entering into the field of the Scriptures like into an uncultivated ground, which nobody cared to cultivate or clear away stones before them. Strauss, in particular, poses as a new Christopher Columbus who discovers in the Gospels things

which nobody before had suspected, divergences which no commentator had noticed and which are sufficient to show that these sacred writings merit no belief. In reality, they pointed them out at all times and the German critic could copy them from Catholic theologians and exegetists, like Voltaire had copied a part of his objections from the works of Dom Calmet, being careful only not to keep any account of the answers of the learned Benedictine of Senones. Since the second century, Tatian had composed a "Harmony of the four Gospels"; Ammonius of Alexandria, had composed another, according to the testimony of Eusebius (*Epist. ad Carpianum*). Everybody knows the famous work of St. Augustine, *On the Accord of the Gospels*. Since that time, in the Middle Ages and in modern times, they have continued this work of concordance, in order to clear up more and more the sacred text.

Strauss needed only to open the books wherein they attempted to reconcile and explain the divergent passages to draw from them the most of his objections. He seems to have done this, for more than once he appears to be satisfied with translating some of these writings, which are the best known, like the *Dilucidatæ questiones in historiam et concordiam evangelicam* of Wouters, and the *Scriptura propugnata* of Veith. A Jesuit, Father Godfroy, who had the patience to compare page for page the mentioned harmonies of the Gospels with the bulky volumes of the *Leben Jesu* of the German professor, came to the following results: "In counting one by one the exegetical difficulties collected by Dr. Strauss in the four volumes of his *Leben Jesu*, we have found more that four hundred, perhaps nearly four hundred and fifty, even comprising those which are hardly of any account. In counting also the difficult points cleared up by the two authors of which we make use, we find five hundred and four in Wouters and one hundred and fifteen in Veith, without speaking of thirty-seven questions of general criticism in which the latter author reduced to nothing, half a century before, the hypotheses of rationalistic exegesis. Now, in comparing in detail the difficulties of Strauss . . . with the difficulties which ancient criticism solved, we affirm . . . that we have not found one single somewhat remarkable difference." (*De l'exegese rationaliste.*)

Not only is there no difference, but, as we have said, the author of the *Leben Jesu* seems to have been more than once a simple translator. Behold the proof of this:

WOUTERS	STRAUSS
De Baptismo S. Johannis Baptistæ . . . Quo sensu dicatur. Matt. iii. 6 and Mark i. 5, quod plurimi Judæorum venerint ad Johannem confitentes peccata sua?	How could Jesus Christ, the justice itself, come to John for a baptism of initiation and in confessing his sins?
Quomodo aperti fuerint coeli? Uterum fuerit vera columba quæ descendit super Christum?	How can we conceive that the heavens opened themselves? that the Holy Ghost, the divine power which fills all, can, like a finite being, move from one place to another and even metamorphose itself into a dove?
An Christi in monte transfiguratio fuerit tantum illusio optica a reflexis radiis solaribus aut lunaribus proveniens, etc.?	Is it possible that the transfiguration was an optical vision produced by the rays of the sun or moon, etc.?

The difficulties of all kind which the four Gospels present and in particular their divergences have, therefore, been known at all times and have not hindered great minds, like the Augustine, the Chrysostom, the Thomas of Aquinas, the Bossuet, the Leibnitz, the Newton, to believe in the evangelical accounts. Why did these men of genius admit, not only the veracity, but also the inspiration of these sacred books, whilst Rationalists deny even their historical value? The reason is, because the latter are predisposed to interpret everything wrongly, instead that the first knew very well that, although the books of the New Testament had a divine origin, they were written in a human language, and by human instruments. Now, every created language is imperfect, and two men, witnesses or even actors of the same fact, see it always, so to say, at a different angle and consequently report it in a different manner, without there being any real contradiction.

We find divergences, not only in various authors, but even in the same author relating the same facts. Let us quote an example: "A king of India, Akoka, who reigned about 275 B. C. and became a convert to Boodhism of which he became a zealous propagator, has left numerous inscriptions in which he relates, among other things,

how and in what time he embraced Boodhism.» Listen what he says in one of them: «In the ninth year after my coronation, King Piyadasi, loved by the gods, conquered immense territories in the kingdom of Kalinga (Orissa). Hundreds of millions of creatures were made prisoners, one hundred thousand fell under the strokes; there were still many other deaths. After the conquest of Kalinga, the king loved by the gods, turned with zeal toward religion and tried to spread it, so great were the remorses which he experienced on account of the violences he had committed in the conquest of Kalinga.» (E. Senart, *Un Roi de l'Inde.*)

Akoka refers here his conversion to the ninth year of his reign. Now, elsewhere, he dates it from the eleventh: «Formerly,» he says, «the kings went out for their pleasure: hunting and other amusements of the kind. I, King Piyadasi, loved by the gods, in the eleventh year after my coronation, set out for perfect illumination. Then, by a religious thought my ways were directed: the visit and alms to the Brahmans, etc.» (*Opus cit.*). To set out for perfect illumination, the *Sambodhi*, is; in the Boodhic language, to enter the ways of perfection.

The contradiction appears flagrant between the two affirmations of the Hindoo king: how did he convert himself in the eleventh year of his reign, if he had been already converted in the ninth? Another inscription gives us the explanation: «Listen what the king, loved by the gods, says: 'During more than two years and a half, I have been *oupâsaka* (that is, I made profession of Boodhism; *oupâsaka* is the name for the lay faithful), but without displaying great zeal. Behold more than one year that I went into the assembly of the clergy'» (*Opus cit.*). The Hindoo king distinguishes, therefore, two dates in his religious life and the third inscription solves the antinomy that exists in the preceding passages. In the year nine of his reign, he had made profession of Boodhism, but only two years later, in his eleventh year, he made a kind of solemn profession of this religion in an assembly of Boodhist clergy and then he became the zealous and ardent propagator of the new ideas. If the inscription which teaches us these latter details had not been written or if it had not been found, the contradiction between the two pretended accounts would have appeared irreconcilable and, nevertheless, as can be seen, it is not real. The divergences between the Gospels could be just as easily

explained, if we were in possession of the necessary informations and details about all its points.

. They not only reproach the Evangelists with contradictions of detail, but also with repetitions or omissions of things which were related by others. Behold a new example which will show us that repetitions and omissions are not more conclusive than the divergences properly speaking against the veracity and exactitude of an account. Two travelers who together visited Mesopotamia during the months of December, 1888, and of January, 1889, have related, in the letters which they addressed to their friends, their navigation on the Tigris. «Arrived at Djezireh, we had such horrible rains,» writes the one, « that we despaired of ever reaching Mossoul by way of land across a clayey country. Also we ordered a *kellek*, which was quickly made, and we went down the Tigris at quite a lively gait. After hardly an hour, we happened to escape a serious danger which we had run since the beginning of the voyage: our *kellek* was carried off on reefs where, fortunately, a rocky point stopped it; our men could get her off only by going into the water and put her into the channel; we had only a few torn utricles; if we had not been stopped on top of the rapids we might have passed a disagreeable quarter of an hour.»

Listen now to what the second traveler writes: « From Djezireh to Bagdad our voyage took place in a *kellek*, that is, a raft placed upon inflated utricles. This manner of travelling is quite agreeable; it hardly fatigues the body, but it offers also emotions. Twice we ran aground in the middle of the river, after having torn quite a number of our utricles. The second time, we and our men had to go into the water to get our raft afloat.»

It can be seen, the divergence is sensible and nevertheless there is in reality no contradiction. The two travellers, on their return home, explained all in the most simple manner. The first letter was written before the second accident happened, but both accidents really took place: very similar facts, therefore, may take place and in fact often happen. Hence, it is entirely wrong to reproach the Evangelical authors with having related several times one fact as distinct events, under pretext that the fact could have taken place but once.

We may add that other letters of the same travellers relate the same navigation on the Tigris and pass completely in silence the dangers which they had run: the omission of one event in a Gospel

does not imply, therefore, the ignorance of this event or the negation of its reality.

These two accounts prove, from an example, which could be multiplied, how divergences produce themselves, and we can draw from it several useful rules. The most circumstantial narratives and the most minute facts of eye-witnesses, worthy of belief, must be taken literally, but they are not in contradiction with more general and less precise accounts, in which we must not press too much the meaning of words. In historical language, as in the two preceding letters, « some » and « several » may have sometimes the same signification, for a historian does not calculate and weigh his expressions like a mathematician who formulates theorems of geometry. His material even rebels against exact science. The events which he relates are facts known from the testimony of the senses and these facts are not counted by figures and measured by the yard; they are of the domain of neither moral nor metaphysical certitude, so that everyone can describe and appreciate them by only placing himself on the particular point of view that brought on, through the force of things, the variety in the exposition.

Now the character of history is not changed in Scripture. It is very important not to form a wrong idea of the inspiration of the sacred writers, if we wish to understand our Gospels. Inspiration does not change nature. God moves the inspired authors to write what He has the intention to make known to men and hinders them from falling into error; but He does not dictate to them the words of which they should make use; according to the greater number of theologians, the inspiration is not a verbal one; the inspired writer preserves the use of his faculties, he writes after his fashion, with more or less correctness and according to his capacity; his style reflects his own character and talents; in a word, he imprints upon his writings the mark of his personality like every other writer. Therefore, he makes use of his intelligence; he also makes use of his memory when he relates events of which he has been witness or which he learned through others. God generally does not manifest them to him by a revelation, properly speaking; He limits Himself to watching that the writer will never go astray and does not deceive himself in his accounts. In both the Old and New Testaments there is a divine element which is found in no other book in the world; but there is also, necessarily, a human element therein, because Providence

makes use, to speak to men, of human instruments which enjoy their human faculties and speak a human language. Inspiration leaves, consequently, to the authors of the Gospels their personal seal, their peculiar aptitudes, their distinctive faculties, and this is, if we join to it the proper object each of them proposed to himself, the explanation of the divergences which we remark in their works and which necessarily must be found therein. These differences are unavoidable, we repeat it, by the writers of all countries; they are this so much more by the Oriental writers who, by temperament, are little inclined to write with order and method, and who trouble themselves less than a writer of the West about that sort of mathematical exactitude required from the Evangelists by certain critics of our day. Now, although St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John have always been veracious in the biographies which they have left us of the divine Master, they have, nevertheless, remained Orientals and have written conformably to the genius of their nation; they relate the facts and reproduce the discourses without attaching more importance than needed to the sensible form which they give to their thought. They have not pushed, as we do to-day, the pre-occupation of trifling details, and they believed themselves sufficiently exact, by relating the foundation of things, without making any efforts to always reproduce the terms. Thus they are all exact, as to the substance, in reporting the inscription of the cross, but only one, St. John, has rigorously preserved to us the same such as it was:

This is Jesus, King of the Jews, says St. Matthew (xxvii. 37).

The King of the Jews, says St. Mark (xv. 26).

This is the King of the Jews, says St. Luke (xxiii. 38).

Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews, says St. John (xix. 19).

Therefore, it did not enter the mind of the Evangelists to write a biography composed, so to speak, according to the modern formula. It is not one of the least oddities of rationalism to take for rule, judgments which it pronounces against the Gospels, namely, the idea which it has of a history of the Saviour. The historians of Jesus Christ, according to rationalism ought to have conceived their subject and formed their plan according to the requirements of actual criticism. Since they deviate from this plan, they do not merit any confidence, and contradict the reality as they contradict themselves among one another. Since they have not fixed chronologically the time and dates, as we do to-day, and contented them-

selves to indicate in a vague manner in what time took place the facts which they report, they conclude from this that they were not well instructed about the facts themselves. According to this reasoning, the history of the foundations of the monasteries of the Carmelites, written by the foundress herself, St. Theresa, would be unworthy of belief, because it does not mark the year of the foundation.

This manner of judging our Sacred Books is so much more unjust as it is certain that the Evangelists had less for object to write a history of Our Lord than to make known His doctrine. His teaching is much more important in their eyes than all the rest. The facts are there only to serve as frame to the lessons or to show that He is the true Messiah, the son of God. We must never forget these things, when we criticise the Gospels.

Neither must we forget that if the Evangelists had a common object, that to preserve to us the teaching of their Master, also each one of them had a particular object. St. Matthew wrote for the Jews and wished to show them in Jesus the Messiah announced by the prophets; St. Mark and St. Luke wrote for the Gentiles and, consequently, ought not to attach the same importance to the prophecies of the Old Testament. St. John had for object to complete the work of his predecessors and has related to us certain facts, preserved certain lessons whose importance the rising heresies caused to be felt. This diversity of points of view had for result a different manner of exposing the things, because nobody can tell all and because, among the choice one is obliged to make, in the midst of the circumstances and details of the events, we must prefer those which are most proper for the end we desire to attain. Hence another abundant source of divergences.

Finally, the object of the Evangelists although had it been identical, the divergences in their accounts would have been nevertheless unavoidable, because four men, considering the same object or the same fact, see and expose it in a different manner, according to their faculties and impressions which they experience. The same personage, painted by several artists of talent, is not absolutely the same in his manifold portraits. In history, the same phenomenon takes place: the eye-witnesses of an event always report it with divergences; there is never an absolute accord among the authors who relate the history of a man or of a period of time.

We do not conclude from this that these historians are unworthy of belief, we do not deny that a battle was not delivered, a city taken, because Titus-Livius, Polybius, and Tacitus relate the battle or siege with different circumstances. Why, therefore, have two weights and two measures? We have no right, in placing ourselves on the ground of rationalism, to ask more from sacred writers than from profane writers.

The divergences among the accounts of the Evangelists were, therefore, unavoidable; we do not need to be surprised at them; even then, if there were existing real contradictions among the four Gospels, the Infidels could not legitimately deny their authority; all that they could claim is that the historians of the Saviour were deceived about certain points of detail. We shall prove in the next chapter that it is impossible for them to establish the latter assertion and to demonstrate that the Evangelists fell into error.

CHAPTER VII

THE DIVERGENCES OF THE GOSPELS—Continued

I. Explanation of Some Particular Divergences.—We cannot be expected to discuss in detail all the divergences of the Gospels, for this an apart work would be needed; but since Strauss has collected, in the introduction of his *Leben Jesu*, the examples that appeared most striking to him, we shall report them in his own terms and examine them afterwards:

"It is not only with the laws that regulate the events, but also with itself and with other relations that an account must be in accord in order to have historic value. The discord is greater if there is a contradiction and if one account is denied by another. For instance, one recital tells expressly that Jesus preached in Galilee only after the arrest of John the Baptist, and another recital, after Jesus had preached for a long time in Galilee as well as in Judea, remarks that John the Baptist had not yet been imprisoned. If, on the contrary, the second narrative gives only something different from what the first gives, the discord refers to accessory points, to the time: purifica-

tion in the temple; to the place: ancient residence of the parents of Jesus; to the number: men of Gadara, angels at the tomb; to the name: Matthew and Levi; or it refers to the foundation itself of the events. In the latter case, often the character and the relations are represented in one account quite different from the other. Example: according to one narrator, John the Baptist acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah destined to suffer; according to another, he is surprised at his suffering state. Now an event is related in two or several ways, and, nevertheless, only one can be true. Example: according to one account, it was on the shores of the lake of Galilee that Jesus made his first disciples leave their nets to follow him; after another account, He gained them for His doctrine in Judea and when He went into Galilee. It is also an objection against historic reality of an account, when events or discourses related as having taken place twice, are so similar that we cannot admit that the event happened or that the discourse was pronounced more than once. We may ask until what point we can count, among the contradictions of the narratives, the cases about which one keeps silence and which the other relates. In itself, and without other explanations, such an argument, taken from the silence, has no value; but it values a good deal if we can prove that the second narrator would have spoken of the thing had he known it, and would have known it if it had taken place." (*Leben Jesu*, 3d edit.)

Let us take up each of these charges and examine all the examples. In the passage we have just read, Strauss first lays down general principles. These principles are true; but several points need to be explained, in order to dispel all equivocal and prevent false applications. Thus, it is exact that the narratives reporting the same fact must be in agreement as to the foundation "to have any historic value"; however, if the discord exists, it does not follow from this, as we have remarked already, that none of these narratives has any value, for one among them may be very true. Moreover, the inexactitude of one document about a detail does not authorize the conclusion that this document merits no belief, because a historian may be deceived about one fact and may be well informed about others. If the Evangelists really contradicted themselves, we might conclude from this that they were not inspired, but not that they are unworthy of belief. Infidels, rejecting the inspiration, should, therefore, admit the authority of the Gospels, in spite of the contradictions which they

claim to discover therein. This is the rule followed by all profane authors.

Let us prove now that there exists no real contradiction between the Evangelists. According to Strauss, one account commences the public ministry of Jesus after the arrest of John, the other, before this arrest. "John (John iii. 24) says that at the moment of Jesus' entering into public life, *John* [the Baptist] *had not yet been cast into prison;* Matthew (Matt. iv. 12) makes Jesus come back into Galilee only after the imprisonment of John the Baptist" (*Opus cit.*). Where is the contradiction? St. Matthew does not say that Jesus commenced to preach only after the imprisonment of the precursor. Paulus himself has remarked that St. Matthew relates here the return into Galilee which followed, not the baptism of Jesus by John, but the first feast of the Pasch.

The contradictions which the German Infidel alleges to point out about the time of the purification, the place of residence of Mary and Joseph, the double name of Matthew and Levi, the number of men of Gadara and of the angels at the tomb, are imaginary. Without entering into useless details, let us remark only, in regard to the purification of the Blessed Virgin, that Strauss avows that St. Luke alone (Luke ii. 22; cf. Lev. xii. 2–4) gives a "precise chronological account." Since St. Matthew does not point out any indication of time, how can he contradict St. Luke?

As to the place of residence of the Holy Family, they wish to discover at any price contradictions in the sacred account as to this point. St. Luke explains quite at length why Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem, St. Matthew tells us, like St. Luke, that Jesus was born in Bethlehem and he teaches us, moreover, that at the return from Egypt the Holy Family went to Nazareth, where St. Luke had shown it established at the moment of the Annunciation, and the critical historian of Jesus sees in this perfect accord a contradiction!

Strauss finds also a contradiction in the fact that St. Matthew is called Levi by two Evangelists (Matt. ix. 9; Mark ii. 14; Luke v. 27) in the history of his vocation. He ought, therefore, also see a contradiction in the double name of St. Peter. However, he is obliged to agree: "They are quite generally in accord that the three synoptics relate only one and the same event" and "this difference of names is more than counterbalanced by other

resemblances"; but nevertheless he concludes: "[Mark and Luke] do not regard Matthew as the same as Levi, whom Jesus took away from his toll-office." Why? Because they "do not tell that Levi had been the former name or the proper name of Matthew." What logic!

The divergence appears more real in the history of the demoniacs of Gadara (Matt. viii. 28; Mark v. 2; Luke viii. 27). "Mark and Luke name only one. . . . Matthew names two." This is true, but from this it does not follow that St. Matthew was deceived. The rule we must follow to explain the divergent accounts, is that the more circumstantial and the more precise must be taken literally, whilst the other accounts must be understood in a general manner. In the present case, two demoniacs leave tombs, which, in these countries serve as dwelling places for entire families; St. Matthew mentions both; St. Mark and St. Luke are less precise and speak only of the one whose healing is the more important.

The same remarks apply to many other analogous examples, and particularly to the objection made by the German author of the *Leben Jesu* in regard to the number of angels present at the tomb of our Saviour. "According to Luke (xxiv. 4)," says Strauss, "[the holy women] behold two men stood by them in shining garments, who announce to them His resurrection. According to Mark (xvi. 5), they see only one young man with a white robe, not erect, but sitting on the right side, who tells them the same news." St. Mark speaks only of the principal angel. A shining garment may be white. St. Mark does by no means contradict St. Luke, as he does not say it was *only* one, but he is not so exact in regard to the detail, confining himself to record an angelic apparition, and what was said to the women on the occasion.

Other pretended contradiction. "According to one narrator, John the Baptist," Strauss tells us again, "acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah destined to suffer; according to the other, he is surprised at his suffering state." But we ourselves acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah and are nevertheless surprised that He wished to suffer as He suffered.

The critical historian of Jesus sees also a contradiction in the history of the vocation of the Apostles. "After one account, it is on the shores of the lake of Galilee that Jesus made His first disciples leave their nets and follow Him; after another account, He gained

them for His doctrine in Judea and when He went to Galilee." — Both are true. The Saviour had called them already in Judea, and later on He made them leave their nets to live with Him and follow Him in His apostolic travels. To-day, we call first young men to the military service, after having withstood the proper examination they are proclaimed soldiers, and only then, after some time, are they effectively incorporated into the army.

Finally, Strauss declares suspicious the two alike events which took place twice, the discourses which were repeated under different circumstances, the facts omitted by some Evangelists and mentioned only in one. It is, however, nothing extraordinary that the same man may produce several similar acts: a sculptor may treat twice the same subject, a painter paint twice the same picture, a professor repeat the same lesson to two classes of different scholars, a preacher preach the same sermon to two distinct congregations, a thaumaturgus heal successively persons afflicted with the same sickness: all this is evident. As to the silence, Strauss is right in saying that "such an argument has no value" by itself. He adds that "it has a great value, if we can prove that the second narrator would have spoken of the thing, had he known it, and would have known it if it had taken place"; but he does not prove that this rule finds its application in the accounts of the Evangelists.

It can be seen by all these examples we have examined, that the divergences of the Gospels are in no manner contradictions. It is the same with all the other antimonies which Rationalists pretend to discover in the four accounts of the life of our Lord. They differ in details, as this was unavoidable, because they did not copy one another and had a different end in view, but they do not contradict themselves. Moreover, — and this is the last point which it is very important to remark, — they are in a wonderful agreement among one another as to the foundation and in the ensemble. Even were we to cut off from the New Testament all the divergent passages attacked by rationalistic criticism, the sacred figure of the Saviour would remain, nevertheless, the same, a divine figure and worthy of our adorations. Nothing is more correct than the following remarks of Lacordaire: —

"At the first regard, the multiplicity of the Evangelists is striking, not only on account of the preface, which bears different names,

but by the reflex of their personal nature in each of the Gospels. It can be seen and felt that St. Matthew, St. Mark, St. Luke, and St. John, are diverse souls, and that they engrave, each one from his view, the figure of the well-beloved Master, without caring in the least what their neighbor does, nor even what successive chronology requires. Hence an arbitary choice of fragments, a defect of connection, apparent contradictions, details omitted in this one and rapported in that one, a multitude of varieties of which we cannot give any account. And, nevertheless, in the four Gospels it is the same figure of Christ, the same sublimity, the same tenderness, the same force, the same word, the same accent, the same peculiarity of physiognomy. Open St. Matthew, the Publican, or St. John, the young man-virgin; select a phrase you wish from both, as different by expression as by subject, and pronounce before a gathering of ten thousand men, all will raise their head, they have recognized Jesus Christ. And the more they will point out the exterior discord of the Evangelists, the more that intimate accord, from which proceeds the moral unity of Christ, will become a proof of their fidelity. If they render unanimously so well the inimitable figure of Jesus Christ, the reason is because it is before them; they behold it such as it was and such as they could not forget. They see it with their senses, with their heart, with the exactitude of a love which is going to give its blood; they are at once witnesses, painters, and martyrs. This posture of God before man is seen only once, and hence why there is but one Gospel, although there are four Evangelists. . . . By a wonderful prodigy, four men have written under the inspiration of the One who had spoken to them, and, in spite of the personal difference of their character and genius, we find in all four the same sublime and simple natural, the same accent, the same truth, the same love and the same God. It is always the Gospel, because it is always Jesus Christ.» (*Conferences de Notre Dame*, conf. xliii.)

II. The Genealogy of Our Lord in the Gospels. — Among the divergences of the Gospels, there is quite a famous one and about which we have to speak in particular, namely, that of the two genealogies of Jesus, which we read in St. Matthew and in St. Luke. The most ancient ecclesiastical authors have occupied themselves with it; the contemporary Infidels are triumphant about it. The former

explained the difference of the two genealogical tables; the latter declare them irreconcilable. "If we reflect," says Strauss, "on the insurmountable difficulties in which all the attempts at reconcilation become unavoidably embarrassed, one will despair, with the most liberal commentators, of the possibility of establishing harmony between the two genealogies, and we have to acknowledge the mutual contradiction." Behold, according to this Infidel critic, in what the discord consists: —

"From David to Joseph, Luke counts forty-one generations, and Matthew only twenty-six. But the principal difficulty is that Luke gives to Jesus, for ancestors, most often quite other individuals than those which Matthew gives Him. It is not that they are in disagreement to bring back the descent of Jesus through Joseph to David and to Abraham; also it is not that they are in disagreement about the generations from Abraham until David, and about the two names of Salathiel and Zorobabel; but the really desperate point is that, from David to the foster-father of Jesus, quite different names, apart from two surrounding names are found in Luke and in Matthew. According to Matthew, the father of Joseph was called Jacob; according to Luke, Eli. According to Matthew, the son of David, through whom Joseph descended from this king, was Salomon; according to Luke, Nathan. Hence, the genealogical tree of Matthew descends through the known royal line, that of Luke through an unknown collateral line. These two lines concur only in Salathiel and Zorobabel, so that however they differ right away about the father of Salathiel and the sons of Zorobabel." (*Leben Jesu.*)

Such is the difficulty, such is the discord. We have here, concludes Strauss, "a complete contradiction." But not only do Infidels claim that the two genealogies of the Gospels contradict themselves, several among them also maintain that both are manufactured and false pieces. It is this, after the example of Strauss, what Renan affirms, when he says: "The inexactitude and the contradictions of the genealogies incline us to believe that they were the result of a popular labor. . . . The genealogy which we read in the Gospel called according to St. Matthew is certainly not the work of the author of this Gospel. He took it from an anterior document. . . . The tower of the genealogy of Matthew is Hebraic; the transcriptions of

the proper nouns are not those of the Septuagint. . . . What is certain, is that this labor of the genealogies was not executed with much unity nor authority; for two quite discordant systems to attach Joseph to the last known personages of the Davidical line have come down to us. It is not impossible that the name of the father and of the grandfather of Joseph were known. Save that, from Zorobabel to Joseph, the whole is manufactured. Whereas, from the time of the Captivity, the Biblical writings do not furnish a chronology any longer, the author believes the space to be shorter than it is in reality and puts too few steps therein. Luke puts more in it. In general, the genealogy of Luke is the best studied. It seems that they seek therein to correct that of Matthew after deliberate views." (*Les Evangiles*, pp. 186–187.)

All the affirmations of Renan, "it seems" are only pure hypotheses without any foundation, except to find fault with the Gospel. Even were we to admit that the two genealogies could not be reconciled, in good logic, it would only follow that one of them is not exact, not that both are false. The only true thing in the remarks of the critics, is that there are breaks in the evangelical lists, but this is neither a discovery,— they have noticed these omissions at all times, —nor an argument against their authenticity or credibility, for the Hebrew historians did not believe themselves bound at all to give in their catalogues all the names without exception.

Infidels try to deny the historical character of the evangelical genealogies, in saying, as Strauss does, "that it is very improbable that after the disturbances of the Exile and from the time that followed, the obscure family of Joseph had preserved genealogies that go so far back." The infidel critic does not dare to say that it is impossible, but he draws the same conclusion as if he had established the impossibility. To make us believe that it is very improbable, he treats the family of Joseph, which descended from the kings of Judea, as obscure! Undoubtedly, it had lost its ancient grandeur, nevertheless it must have kept its titles of nobility: whole Biblical history shows us with what exactitude the Jews preserved their genealogies. After the Captivity, after the return into Judea, Zorobabel occupies himself with genealogies (I. Par. ix.; II. Esdr. xi.; cf. I. Par. iii. 19; II. Esdr. vii. 5; xii.). Nehemias does the same (II. Esdr. vii. 5; xii. 26; cf. I. Esdr. ii.; II. Esdr. vii.; xii. 22; I. Par. iii. 21–24). The books of Tobias, of Esther, of the Machabees, furnish, also, the proof of the care

with which each family kept its genealogical tables (Tob. i. 1; Judith viii. 1; I. Mach. ii. 1–5; viii. 17; xiv. 29). The history of the enumeration which took place in Judea in the time of the birth of Jesus, what it tells us of Zacharias, of Elisabeth his wife, of Anna daughter of Phanuel, are so many proofs of the same fact (Luke i. 5; ii. 36). Aside from these testimonies of the New Testament Josephus, at the head of his *Life*, makes known his descent, and ends in saying: "I have thus traced my genealogy as I have found it marked in the public tables."

The two Evangelical lists might, therefore, have been taken from authentic documents. It is true that they differ from one another, but they are not irreconcilable at all. We cannot tell with entire certitude what the real solution of the difficulty is, because, like so many other facts of antiquity, the documents are wanting; however, for every unprejudiced man, the explanations already given by the Fathers of the Church are sufficient to render an account of the diversity of the two documents, in the two historians who show themselves otherwise well informed and worthy of belief. These explanations may be reduced to two principal ones. Behold the first:—

"How can it be that Joseph is at the same time a son of Jacob and a son of Eli, that he descends at the same time from David through Salomon and the kings (as St. Matthew says), and through Nathan and a branch which never reigned (as St. Luke says)? The answer seems . . . to be quite easy. If we had two genealogies of the second Africanus, the one might give us the series of the Scipios, the other that of the Emilians; both of them would be historical: the author of the one would be a party of the natural father, the author of the other, of the adoptive father of the heroes. It is thus, as St. Augustine already believed (*De consensu Evangelistarum*), that we must take the Jacob of Matthew for the natural father, the Eli of Luke for the adoptive father of Joseph. And since, in order to prevent the extinction of families, the Mosaic Law prescribed that if a husband happened to die without children, but leaving a brother, the widow married this brother, and the first son of the widow and the brother was inscribed to the account of the dead (Deut. xxv. 5, etc.). A predecessor of St. Augustine, Julius Africanus (In Eusebius, *H. E.*

i. 7), believed to reconcile the divergence of the two genealogies in supposing that the mother of Joseph was married first to Eli, from whom she had no son, had married afterwards, after the death of Eli, the brother of the latter, Jacob, to whom she would have given Joseph. From which it would follow that Matthew was right in saying that Jacob had begotten Joseph of whom he was the natural father, and that Luke would not have been wrong in calling Joseph the son of Eli, because Joseph, in virtue of the law, had to be inscribed under the name of Eli." (D. Strauss, *Neues Leben Jesu.*)

The one who speaks thus and gives this explanation, is Strauss himself, in his *Neues Leben Jesu.* He is careful in admitting it, this goes without telling; as a partisan spirit, he accepts nothing that is in favor of the Gospels and the worst pretexts are good enough for him to make the attempt to find the sacred writers at fault. But, in spite of himself, he is obliged to agree that it may be admitted. "This is very ingenious, but not impossible," he says. Listen now to the exposition of the second explanation, made by Strauss: —

"They believed, until at present, to be able to solve the difficulty in a much more simple way: they claimed that we have, in one of the Evangelists, the genealogy of Joseph and in the other that of Mary, and that, consequently, the divergence of the two genealogies is not a contradiction. . . . The opionion that Mary also belonged to the race of David is very ancient. . . . The opinion prevailed that Mary descended from David. Several apocryphals express themselves in this sense; it is the same with Justin the Martyr, who says that the Virgin was off the race of David, of Jacob, of Isaac, and Abraham, a phrase according to which we even might believe that he referred to Mary one of our genealogical tables, which equally go back through David to Abraham. . . . The genealogy in Luke iii. 23 would mean: either Jesus was, comformably to the common opinion, a son of Joseph, who himself was a grandson of Eli, father of Mary, or Jesus was, as they believed a son of Joseph, and, through Mary, grandson of Eli. . . . We cannot deny . . . that the genitive in Luke, being an independent

case, is susceptible to signify any relation of kinship and consequently that of son-in-law or of grandson."

This second explanation may be equally true. However, the first seems to be preferable, because it is the traditional explanation, that which the ancients have given; it was founded on the Jewish customs, and the Christians of pagan origin could hardly have imagined by themselves a similar solution; also Julius Africanus teaches us that they held this solution of the *Desposyni* or of the parents of the Saviour, which made him say: "It is not in want of proofs and is no fiction" (In Eusebius, *H. E.* i. 7). St. Matthew, writing for the Jews, very probably reproduced, as Grotius assures us, the legal genealogy of Joseph, legitimate heir to the throne of David. St. Luke, writing for the Gentiles, has inserted in his Gospel the real genealogy of the spouse of Mary. We can also admit, with a certain number of interpreters, that the Blessed Virgin was a cousin of St. Joseph and that, if the tables of the Gospels do not give us formally her genealogy, they give it, however, in fact, for she was also, like her spouse, of the tribe of Judea and of the race of David.

CHAPTER VIII

THE MIRACLES OF THE GOSPELS

Our Lord, during His mortal life, wrought numerous miracles, which are related to us in the Gospels. Since Rationalistic criticism rejects the supernatural, it refuses *a priori* to admit them. We cannot discuss here the existence of particular miracles in detail, because Rationalists reject them for philosophical reasons and not for reasons of criticism. They pretend that God, — if they still admit His existence, — can produce no effect outside the general laws; but we have proved, on the contrary, that God *is* free in His acts and that, consequently, He can modify, whenever He pleases, the ordinary course of nature and form exceptions to the laws which He himself has established. The miracles are, therefore, possible and since they are proven in authentical books and worthy of belief, like the Gospels, we have no right to reject them.

This is the only answer which must be made to the objections of Strauss and his followers. But there are, in the evangelical accounts, a class of miracles which it is necessary to examine apart, because they are considered to-day, by a certain number of savants, as not deserving the name of miracles: namely, the healings of those possessed by the devil.

I. Attacks of Infidels Against Demoniacal Possessions. —There is often question of possessed persons in the first three Gospels: St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. Luke relate that the Saviour healed a great number of these unfortunate persons. To-day the reality and even the possibility of demoniacal possessions are denied in principle by Rationalists and, to believe certain infidel physicians, the sick whom the Gospel calls demoniacs and possessed, were only neuropaths. The details which we read in the New Testament are sufficient, they say, to establish that these pretended possessions were simply madness or paralysis. Now these sicknesses may be cured through exaltation of the imagination, for it is established by numerous and conclusive experiments that the imagination sometimes heals the neuropaths, when they become exalted so as to give to their nerves a lively and sudden shock.

We shall examine what we have to believe of these objections against demoniacal possessions. Let us first see what Scripture teaches us about the demons and possessions; then we will compare the possessed of the Gospels with the sick studied in our days by certain physicians.

II. The Demon in the Scriptures.—Both the Old and New Testaments teach us that there are existing evil spirits, hardened in evil, desiring the evil of men and moving them towards evil. These perverted spirits receive two different names, that of "demons" and that of "devils." Only the latter name, in Scripture, is always given to the chief of the fallen angels.

The word "demon" seems to signify "knowing" or "dividing." The sacred writers have borrowed it from profane writers, but attached to it a more precise and more determined meaning. In Homer, demon is about synonymous with God: the old poet uses both expressions indifferently. It is not the same case in Hesiod: the chanter of the *Days* distinguishes the gods from the demons; the former are the souls of men who lived during the golden age, of the benevolent genii. However, as can be seen, neither in the one nor in

the other is the name demon taken in a bad sense. The Jew Philo employs it to designate the angels, either good or bad. Josephus, on the contrary, makes use of it in the same sense as the Evangelists. The transition from a benevolent genius to an evil genius was wrought mostly among the pagans. The *daimôn* of the Greek tragedians is often a malevolent genius, the evil genius of a family, like that of the family of Agamemnon, for instance. The man ruled by a furious passion, which throws him into crime and misfortune, is represented as under the power of a *daimôn*.

From the ancient word *daimôn*, the Hellenists had formed in a more recent period the neutral adjective *daimonion*, substantively employed and signifying something more vague than *daimôn*. Plato makes use of it, in his *Banquet*, to designate those intermediary beings between God and men, "messengers of the first to the second." Everybody has heard speaking of the *daimonion* of Socrates. They have discussed a good deal about the nature of the latter, but without coming to an understanding. Did the philosopher call thus a personal being or a sort of inner oracle that admonished him what he should do and to the orders of which he obeyed? What is certain, is that the illustrious Athenian was for this motive accused of introducing the worship of new *daimonia*, not acknowledged by the Republic. It is equally certain that the demon of Socrates was a benevolent demon.

Such were the different meanings attached to the word demon, when the Septuagint undertook the Greek translation of the Old Testament. They never employed it to designate the true God, but they made use of it three times to name or qualify the false gods or the idols, once in Deuteronomy and twice in the Psalms (Deut. xxxii. 17; Ps. cv. 37; xcv. 5; cf. Ps. xcv. 5, and Baruch iv. 7; I. Cor. x. 20). In Deuteronomy and in Psalm cv. the corresponding Hebrew word is *sedîm*, whose primitive meaning appears to be that of "masters," and by which the Rabbis understand the demons, taken in the sense we ourselves give to this term. In Psalm xcv. the word of the original Hebrew is *ĕlilîm*, "the vain," that is, the idols. The Septuagint have also translated by "demon" in the prophet Isaias the word of *gad*, the deified "fortune" (Is. lxv. 11), and the name of *se'îrîm*, by the "hairy," the roebuck (Is. xiii. 21). Finally, in Psalm *Qui habitat in adjutorio Altissimi* (Ps. xc. 6), the Greek translators have transformed the verb "to devastate" into the name of an agent and

have rendered it by "demon of the South." In all these passages, the Jewish interpreters have called demon what they considered as idols or false gods.

The study of the Greek of the Septuagint has a very great importance for the understanding of the original text of the New Testament, because their language is that of the Hellenist Jews, and consequently that of the deuterocanonical books of the Old Testament, as also that of the Apostles in the New Testament. The translators of the protocanonical books had called the false gods demons; the translators or the authors of the deuterocanonical books received from them this appellation and took it in a bad sense, by applying it not only to false gods, but in general to fallen angels. With the meaning we give to it to-day, the expression of demon is employed in Tobias and in Baruch (Tob. vi. 17; viii. 3; Baruch iv. 35). However, the Book of Tobias determines its nature in several passages in adding the epithet of "evil" (Tob. iii. 8–17; vi. 7). For the writers of the New Testament, demon, quite shortly, means evil spirit (Matt. x. 1; xii. 43, etc.). They represent him always as a pure spirit, primitively good and of the same nature as the good angels, but having revolted against God, subject to a chief whom the people call Beelzebub, like the ancient god of Accaron, and who is nobody else but Satan (Matt. xii. 24–27; cf. Luke x. 17–18). He is forever hardened in evil, enemy of man as well as of God, and seeking to hurt us by inclining our soul towards sin (I. Tim. iv. 1) and even by afflicting the body through physical evils.

This perverse tendency of the demon caused him to be called, in the Christian language, devil, *diabolos*. This term, which signifies calumniator, accuser, and detractor, and which is always employed as a common substantive by the classical writers of Greece, has become in the New Testament a sort of proper noun of the evil spirit. The Apostles borrowed it from the Septuagint. In their version, the word *diabolos* translates the name of "Satan," which we read in the Hebrew text in the Book of Job, of the Paralipomena and of Zacharias (Job i. 11; I. Par. xxi. 1; Zach. iii. 1–2), to designate the chief of the demons, the author of evil, who accuses men, and seeks to hurt them in the sight of God. Hence it comes that this name, in the Gospels and Epistles, is not applied to the evil spirits in general, but only to their chief, called also, in various passages, by his Hebrew name, Satan or "enemy"

(Matt. iv. 10; Mark iii. 26; Luke x. 18, etc.). The chief of the demons, or the demons themselves, being evil spirits and inclined towards evil, seeks since the beginning of the world, to hurt men, by pursuing them as a prey like roaring lions (Gen. iii; Job i. and ii.; Wisd. ii. 24; I. Peter v. 8). They are the enemies of God, but as they cannot attack Him himself directly, they take revenge on Him by attacking His reasonable creatures, the men. It is especially our soul, the most precious part of our being, which they try to lead into evil; however, they also torment sometimes the body, and this was frequently the case in the time of our Saviour.

III. Demoniacal Possessions. — The victims of the enmity of the demon are known by the name of demoniacs, or as possessed by a demon. The Gospels describe what these unfortunate people had to suffer. Even the word *possessed* indicates that they were no longer their own masters, but that they had fallen under the power of the evil spirits, to whom they served as instruments and organs. The New Testament, however, does not employ the word possessed; the term by which it designates those of whom the demon had taken hold has the same meaning, but in expressing more strongly, if possible, their subjection to the spirit of evil, in whom they seem to be transformed, the word "possessed" had the meaning of being *endomonized*. Later on, in the ecclesiastical language of the Greeks, they called the demoniacs "energumens"; however the words: possessed by the demon, or, by ellipsis, possessed and possession, became the ordinary terminology among the Christians. The Arabic language also designates the demoniac under the name of possessed, *maskum*, *malbus*, *m'amur*, understanding thereby, *li-l-djinn*, one possessed by a *djinn* (genius) or a demon. We have to remark that the Talmud has no word to signify either the possessed or possession: it speaks of the evil spirit who illtreats man, but it never says that he enters him and takes possession of him. The New Testament, on the contrary, represents to us the demon as the master of the one of whom he has taken possession and in whom he dwells. The words which proceed from the mouth of the possessed are thus, not their own words, but those of the evil spirits; their strength is often, on this account, extraordinary and superhuman.

However, possession or the effects of possession, such as the Gospels speak of, were not continuous: the unfortunate demoniac became master of himself at intervals; the spirit which tormented

him gave him some moments of rest; but soon he felt anew the whole weight of the burden; his intelligence and will vanished, and, powerless to control his faculties, physical evils of all kinds increased his torments. Almost always possession is accompanied with infirmities, such as blindness (Matt. xii. 22), dumbness (ix. 32; xii. 22), or bodily disorders, especially nervous troubles, insanity (Mark i. 5; cf. John vii. 20; viii. 48; x. 20; Matt. xi. 18), and epilepsy (Mark. ix. 16–26). It is this association of illness to this extraordinary state that furnishes a pretext to Infidels of our time to deny the truth of possession: they wish to see in those whom the Gospel calls demoniacs only simple sick persons, attacked with madness, epilepsy, dumbness, etc. In the language of the New Testament, they say "to have a demon" is a manner of speaking which simply means to be insane (John vii. 20; viii. 48; x. 20); there exists, in the description of cases of possession, no trait, no detail that is proper to characterize a specific and particular state; on the contrary, modern medicine finds therein all the symptoms mentioned in the natural diseases which it studies and tries to heal: nervous disorders, insanities, hysterics, and epilepsy. Who does not recognize, for instance, a case of ordinary epilepsy in the pretended possessed whom St. Matthew and St. Mark represent to us as falling now into the water and then into the fire, gnashing his teeth and foaming from the mouth? (Matt. xvii. 14; Mark ix. 17, 19, 21) How can we help seeing a furious madman in the so-called demoniac of Gadara, who lives in tombs, gives vent to frightful shrieks, disfigures himself with stones, breaks the bonds by which they wish to fetter him, and becomes the terror of the country? (Mark v. 3–5). It is the same with all the other cases of possession, say the Rationalists.

It cannot be denied that the possessed of the Gospels had diseases, the symptoms of which agree in general with known and natural diseases, according to the description given by the three synoptics. Also a certain number of Protestant critics, even among those who admit the supernatural, believe in our days that the reality of possessions can be denied. According to them, the credibility of the Gospels is not injured thereby, because, they say, if our Lord and the Apostles, in speaking of demoniacs, adopted the language of their time, they did not accept on this account its prejudices and errors. When Jesus Christ speaks of persons possessed by the demon, He does not mean thereby to certify that there are sick really possessed, but, in order to

be understood by those to whom He speaks, He borrows the language of which they made use to designate certain extraordinary diseases, such as madness and epilepsy, which, by their peculiar character, by their strange phenomena, have always struck the imagination of the mass. Still, to-day, in the East, a madman is considered as afflicted by a divine evil. The Saviour, in healing the sick, did not need to discuss the false or true notions of the crowd; He conformed Himself in His language to the manner of seeing like the people, in order to be understood.

Behold the explanation given by mitigated Rationalists. It is inadmissible. We can admit, undoubtedly, that Holy Scripture sometimes makes use of popular expressions, although they are not true, rigorously speaking, because custom has sanctioned them and their use is thus sufficiently justified. We find various examples of them in the Sacred Books, when there is question of scientific truths or of things indifferent in religious matter, for instance, in the famous miracle of Josue, when the successor of Moses commanded the sun, not the earth, to stop. But it is impossible to consider as a popular expression what Christ and the Apostles tell us of possessions. That the people, always inclined towards exaggeration, imagined to see sometimes possessions there where there were only ordinary diseases, certainly this might have happened; but that the bodily sick from whom the divine Master expelled the demons were not really possessed, this is irreconcilable with the language of the Gospels.

Our Lord did not speak of the possessed only in the presence of the people, but also to His disciples in the particular instructions which He gave to them and His language is always such that He supposes the reality of demoniacal possessions (Matt. xvii. 17–20; Luke x. 17–20). One of His discourses treats wholly of the contradiction which would exist between Satan and the demons, his minions, if He, Jesus, expelled the demons from the bodies of the possessed by the power of the prince of the demons (Matt. xii. 25–29; Luke xi. 15–26). How could He have reasoned thus, if He did not really expel the demons? Therefore, He did not speak according to popular belief, but according to truth.

Note also that there existed in regard to this subject a popular prejudice that was erroneous, and of which we discover no trace in the New Testament. Josephus makes it known to us. It consisted in explaining possession by the entering of the souls of the

wicked, not of the demons, into the bodies of the possessed; the wicked, after their death, thus came to torment the living (*Bell. Jud.* VII. vi. 3). We read nothing similar in the Gospels.

We must, therefore, admit that the possessed were really under the power of the demons. Their victims, it is true, were often afflicted with nervous diseases or other illnesses, the symptoms of which were ordinary symptoms; but in spite of this complication, it is easy to indicate some specific characters of possession. The sacred writers do not confound the demoniacs with simple sick or infirm persons (Matt. iv. 24; Mark i. 32, 34; Luke vi. 17–18). For them, every dumb person was not a possessed person (cf. Matt. ix. 32, and Mark vii. 32). St. Matthew expressly distinguishes demoniacs from lunatics or madmen and from paralytics (Matt. iv. 24). What, in their accounts, is the specific trait of possession, is that the demon speaks through the mouth of the possessed, by manifesting a supernatural knowledge, by proclaiming that Jesus is not only the son of David, as the Jews called Him, but the son of God and the Messiah (Matt. viii. 29; Mark i. 24, 34; v. 7; Luke iv. 41). The possessed are healed when the demon leaves their bodies. To show us the reality of this possession, Christ permits the demons who leave the bodies of the possessed of Gadara to enter those of swine and the latter throw themselves into Lake Tiberias (Matt. viii. 30–32; Mark v. 9–13).

The proper and distinctive character of possession is, therefore, the total or partial loss of reason and will, produced through the dwelling of the demon in the body of the possessed. The actions of this unfortunate person, his words and, to a certain point, his thoughts, are those of the evil spirit and not his own; he has in some manner lost his personality, or at least there is in him a real duality; he is under the power, under the tyranny of the demon; he may struggle against this odious burden and temporarily succeed in ridding himself thereof, but soon he falls again under the dreadful influence, in spite of all his efforts to reconquer his independence from the control of his oppressor; it is the wicked spirit that speaks through his mouth, he is only his instrument and organ; this lamentable state ceases only when the Saviour has miraculously expelled the demon (Acts x. 38; Matt. viii. 29–31; Mark i. 24; v. 7, 9, 12; Luke iv. 41; viii. 27–39).

They object against the reality of demoniacal possessions, because we find no example thereof in the Old Testament, because St. John

himself does not speak thereof in his Gospel, finally, because, they are unknown in our days or rather because it is well known to-day that they are simple and natural pathological states.

The diseases which the contemporary physicians assimilate with ancient possessions are different from them, as can be determined by the characteristics we have indicated. Several of the possessed whose healing the Gospels attest could not have been healed through the exaltation of their imagination: thus the demoniacs of Gadara, who were neither epileptic nor hysterical persons, but violently insane persons (Mark v. 2–5). Imagination did never heal furious madmen. All the miraculous healings of the New Testament and in particular those of the possessed are completely different from facts of hypnotism by which they have made the attempt in our days to explain them. That possessions are unknown to-day, we might deny. Missionaries attest that they are not very rare in still pagan countries, and who can affirm that we find no case among us?

But, be this as it may, the actual cessation of possessions would not prove anything more against their existence in our Lord's time, than their non-existence before Christ. God could give this power to the demon at a determined moment, and neither before nor after, just as He permitted that certain miracles were frequent in the beginning of the Church and ceased to be this afterwards. Moreover, possessions could exist without that history makes mention of them. But the monuments of the Church testify that they were frequent after the time of Christ, although they had been more common during the apostolic age, because God wished to show, in this manner, the empire of Satan and the power of His Son over the prince of the demons. The healing of the possessed lively struck the pagans, and the authors of apologies in favor of the Christian religion are not afraid to recall to their mind the power of the exorcists over the victims of the evil spirit. As to St. John, the Evangelist, if he did not relate expressly healings of demoniacs, the reason is that one of the ends of his Gospel was to complete the account of the three synoptics and he did not need to do this in regard to the point in question. However, he does not neglect to speak thereof, whenever occasion offers itself (John x. 21).

Possessions are, therefore, a real fact, however extraordinary it might appear, and which it is indeed; science of our days does not explain it at all; their healing remains a miracle which a divine power alone is capable of producing.

CHAPTER IX

THE BROTHERS OF THE LORD

CHRISTIAN antiquity is unanimous in rendering homage to the perpetual Virginity of Mary. Several heretics, however, formerly denied this privilege of the Blessed Virgin: Antidicomarianites, Helvidians, and Jovinianists; a great number of Protestants have also maintained, since the sixteenth century, that Jesus had brothers and sisters. Modern Rationalists have hastened to renew this error, they even aggravated it, for many heretics gave to Jesus only half-brothers, sons of Joseph, but not of Mary, and believed in the supernatural origin of the Saviour, whilst contemporary Infidels make of our Lord, as of His pretended brothers, the sons of Joseph and Mary.

I. THE MEANING OF THE WORD BROTHER IN SCRIPTURE.—We shall prove further on that Jesus Christ is the only son of the Blessed Virgin; we shall establish also that history does not tell us of any other son of St. Joseph. But, before all, it is necessary to examine about the real meaning of the word brother, *'ah*, in the Hebrew language; for the error of Rationalists is based upon a false interpretation and on the abuse of this word. Renan says: "The assertion that the word *'ah* (brother) has in Hebrew a broader sense than in French is entirely false, abusive or erroneous." The meaning of the word *'ah* is identically the same as that of the word "brother." The metaphorical applications prove nothing against its proper sense. Because a preacher calls his hearers "my brethren," can we conclude that the word "brother" has not in French a very precise meaning? Now, it is evident that, in the quoted passages, the word "brother" is not taken in a figurative sense. Notice in particular Matt. xii. 46, etc., who also excludes the abusive sense of "cousin."

This passage of Renan is one of the most surprising we meet with in his *Vie de Jesus*. That a Hebraist could deny "that the word *'ah* has, in Hebrew, a broader sense than in French," is really incomprehensible. Renan himself is obliged to admit that the cousins of Jesus were called "brethren of the Lord," and he assures us that "the meaning of the word *'ah* is identically the same as that of the word *brother!*" In reality, *'ah* in Hebrew and brother in French or English are employed in a very different man-

ner. The Hebrew is not rich in expressions like our western languages, like the Greek and Latin. It is particularly poor in expressing degrees of relationship; there is no term proper to designate *cousins*, and if one has to speak of them, he calls them *brothers*. This is an incontestable fact, which is known to every Hebraist, and which is even known to simple readers of the Bible. The Hebrew word *'ah* applies itself not only to a brother, in the strict sense of the word, but to any relative, a nephew (Gen. xiv. 14, 16; xiii. 8; xxix. 12, 15), cousin (Num. xvi. 10), and even husband (cf. Cantic. iv. 9, where the husband is called sister). It is used in a still more extensive sense: they make use of it in saying that the man of whom they speak belongs to a people of the same race (Num. xx. 14); that he is an ally (Amos i. 9), or simply a friend (Job vi. 15). They also give the name brothers to those who fill the same offices (III. Ki. ix. 13). Finally, they employ it quite freely in the metaphorical sense, to point out any resemblance: "I was the brother of dragons," that is, similar to dragons, says Job (xxx. 29).

From what we have said, it shows that the precise degree of kinship cannot be determined in Hebrew by the sole name *'ah;* it can be fixed only with the help of other accounts, and, being in want of these accounts, the question remains undecided. It is thus that it is impossible for the commentators to know whether Othoniel, who is called *brother* of Caleb, was really his brother or simply his nephew (Jos. xv. 17; Judges, 13; I. Par. iv. 13).

The Greek version of the Septuagint translates in some mechanical way the word *'ah* by *adelphos*, "brother," without trying to use the Greek term, which ought to have been employed to designate exactly the degree of relationship. Hence the word *anepsios*, "cousin," is not found in the Greek version of the Old Testament, except in two passages.*

St. Jerome, in his Latin translation of the Bible, did like the Septuagint: he put *frater* where the Hebrew had *'ah*, although this word *frater* might lead into error those of the Latins who ignored the particular value of the original word. The expression *consobrinus* is, therefore, never employed in our Vulgate to render the Hebrew *'ah*. The difficulty which they would have encountered,

* These two exceptions are: Num. xxxvi. 11, where the word *anepsios* does not translate the word *'ah*, "brother," but the words *benê dôdehen*, "sons of their uncle," and Tobias vii. 2.

besides, in a certain number of passages, in determining the real degree of relationship expressed by the word *brother* in the original text, justifies the proceeding of translation adopted by the Septuagint and by St. Jerome: it was the most simple and least subject to inconveniences.

The authors of the New Testament have written in Greek, but really, their language is only from the Hebrew or Syro-Chaldaic dressed in Greek, especially in the four Gospels. Their style is filled with Hebraisms and their phrases abound in Oriental expressions. For the designation of degrees of relationship in particular, they employ solely the terms which we find in the Old Testament and they make use of the word *adelphos* as the Septuagint did, in order to give the Hebrew word *'ah* whatever the sense might be one had to attach to it. The word *anepsios*, "cousin," is found only once in the New Testament, in the Epistle of St. Paul to the Colossians (iv. 10), where the Apostle speaks of Mark, cousin of Barnabas. We do not find it in the Gospels. The meaning of the word *brother*, in the New Testament, is rather restrained, on account of the relations which the political changes, accomplished in Palestine, had established between the Jews and other nations. Then the Jews distinguished between *brother* and *neighbor*. The *brother* was the Israelite by origin; the *neighbor* was the Proselyte; the pagan was for them neither brother nor neighbor. Jesus Christ and the Apostles gave the name of brother to all the Christians, and that of neighbor to all men.

According to what we have said, it is, therefore, philologically certain that we cannot conclude from the word brother, employed in both the Old and New Testament, that the one who is thus qualified is an offspring of the same father or of the same mother as the person of whom he is called brother. This is a very important point to be noted, and which is above all contestation.

The real meaning of the word brother being thus determined by itself, we can define it only, as we have already remarked, in so far as the express indication of the family relations in other passages permits to constitute exactly a genealogical tree.

These preliminaries posed, let us now study the question of the brothers of the Lord.

II. Jesus Christ the Only Son of Mary.—The New Testament makes known to us several personages which it calls, indeed,

brothers of Jesus, and whose names are: James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude. We meet twelve times, in the New Testament, with the expression *brothers* or *brother* of Jesus, nine times in the Gospels and three times outside the Gospels. What is, therefore, the precise meaning we have to attach to it? According to what we have established, it is impossible to conclude anything from the expression itself; we can determine its value only by the accounts furnished to us by ancient monuments. What do they teach us?

Before all let us state that the writings of the New Testament mention nowhere, in proper terms, other sons of Mary but Jesus. We never read therein that the personages called brothers of Jesus were sons of Mary, spouse of Joseph, although they are named several times with Joseph and Mary. On the contrary, we see therein in a clear manner, that James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude were sons of Mary, wife of Cleophas. Therefore, there exists no proof, at least no direct proof, in favor of the plurality of the sons of Mary, no more than of the existence of the sons of Joseph.

Renan is obliged to admit this, in some manner, in the following terms: "The inexactitude of the accounts furnished by the Gospels about the material circumstances of the life of Jesus, the incertitude of the traditions of the first century, collected by Hegesippus, the frequent homonymies which spread so much embarrassment on the history of the Jews at all times *make the questions in regard to the family of Jesus almost insolluble.*" The question as to the subject about which Renan writes these words, that which he calls, as we said before, "the brothers and cousins of Jesus," is not insoluble at all, and it is, in fact, solved by the attentive comparison of the texts and by tradition; but his language betrays the embarrassment of those who, at all hazards, wish to give brothers to the Saviour.

Renan himself admits that, since many centuries, all the Catholics admit this tradition: "The orthodox doctors since Jerome," he says, "believe to remove the difficulty in supposing that the four personages enumerated by Mark and Matthew as brothers of Jesus were in reality his first cousins, sons of Mary Cleophas. But this is inadmissible." It is so little inadmissible "that the four personages enumerated by Mark and Matthew" are only first cousins of Jesus that we shall very soon see Renan himself partly admitting this. Besides, for the moment, it is sufficient to notice his avowal about the existence of tradition since the end of the fourth century. But this

tradition is much more ancient: it goes back to the origin of Christianity and supports itself on the authority and testimony of Hegesippus. Also its force is such that St. Peter Damianus wrote to Pope Nicholas that it was the belief of the Church.

It alone can, besides, explain to us the account of the Gospels, and this is so true that, to prove it, we need to borrow our argumentation only from Renan himself. "What is surprising," he says, "is that in uniting other accounts furnished by the Gospels, by Hegesippus, by the most ancient traditions of the Church of Jerusalem, they form a family of first cousins of Jesus, carrying almost [almost is too much] the same names which are given by Matthew and by Mark as those of the brothers of Jesus. Among the women, indeed, which the synoptics place at the foot of the cross of Jesus and who affirmed the resurrection, is found one *Mary, mother of James the Minor and of Jose* (Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xv. 40–47; xvi. 1; Luke xxiv. 10). This Mary is certainly the same as that which the fourth Gospel places also at the foot of the cross, which it calls Mary of Cleophas (John xix. 25), which undoubtedly signifies Mary, wife of Cleophas, and of which it made a sister of the mother of Jesus. The difficulty is that the two sisters carrying the same name hardly fixes the attention of the fourth Evangelist, who does not give once to the mother of Jesus the name of Mary."

Let us remark, in passing, in regard to the latter affirmations of Renan and of his insinuations against St. John, that it is not certain at all that the sister of the Blessed Virgin was called Mary and especially that Mary of Cleophas was her real sister. A learned German, Wiessler, maintained, in 1840, that St. John, in the account of the Passion, mentions not only three persons as present at the crucifixion, but four, *i. e.*, we must understand by the words: "the sister of His mother, Mary of Cleophas" (John xix. 25), two women instead of one, St. John not giving the name of the sister of the Blessed Virgin, no more than he gives the name of the Blessed Virgin herself. For Wiessler, the sister of the Blessed Virgin is Salome, not Mary of Cleophas.

But even admitting that the sister of Mary and Mary of Cleophas are one and the same person, which appears more probable, it does not follow that Mary of Cleophas was the real sister of the mother of Jesus; she might have been only her sister-in-law, the word sister having in Hebrew, and consequently in the Gospels, a sense as

broad as that of brother. What peremptorily confirms this explanation, is that which Eusebius teaches us, after Hegesippus, that "Cleophas was a brother of Joseph" (In Eusebius, *H. E.* iv. 22). The wife of Cleophas, Mary, was therefore the sister-in-law of the Blessed Virgin. The identity of name has no longer, consequently, anything surprising, because it is nothing extraordinary that two sisters carry the same name. Renan himself acknowledges, in the main, the exactitude of what we are telling. He says: "How were the sons of Cleophas first cousins of Jesus? They might have been this either through their mother, Mary Cleophas, . . . or through their father, Cleophas, of whom Hegesippus makes a brother of Joseph; or through both sides at once; for, strictly speaking, it is possible that the two brothers had married the two sisters. Of these three hypotheses, the second is the most probable. The hypothesis of two sisters carrying the same name is a very great improbability. . . . Let us add that, according to a painful interpretation, it is true, but although admissible, the expression "the sister of His mother" does not regard "Mary Cleophas," but a different personage, unnamed, like the mother of Jesus herself. The ancient Hegesippus, so preoccupied with all that regarded the family of Jesus, seems to have known the truth very well as to this point."

It was in vain, therefore, that Renan wished to attack St. John. In the end he gives us right against his own affirmations. He continues: "However it may be as to the latter point, we have already two first cousins of Jesus calling themselves James and Jose. We find, moreover, a Simon, son of Cleophas, whom Hegesippus and all those who have transmitted the remembrances of the primitive Church of Jerusalem present as the second bishop of Jerusalem and as having been martyred under Trajan. Finally, we have traces of a fourth Cleopid in that Juda, son of James, who appears to have been the successor of Simon, son of Cleophas, in the see of Jerusalem. The family of Cleophas appearing to have held in an almost hereditary manner the government of the Church of Jerusalem from Titus to Hadrian, there is nothing rash in supposing that the James, father of this Juda, was James the Less, son of Mary Cleophas. Thus we have three sons of Cleophas, calling themselves James, Jose, Simon, exactly like the brothers of Jesus mentioned by the synoptics, without speaking of a hypothetical nephew Two sisters carrying the same name was already a strong singu-

larity. What could we say of the case if these two sisters would have had three sons bearing the same name? No critic will admit the possibility of a similar coincidence."

The conclusion is certainly correct: to admit that Jesus had four brothers and four first cousins, bearing the same name, is to violate all the rules of probability and of criticism. Behold, nevertheless, what a great many Protestants are doing, in order to deny the Virginity of Mary, Mother of God.

Renan is right in rejecting their error. Unfortunately, he himself falls into another. But, before following him any further, it is good to inquire what we can learn of the brothers of the Lord.

The sons of Mary of Cleophas are first, James the Apostle, known under the name of James the Less, and Joseph. The identification of James, son of the Mary of Calvary, with one of the Apostles of this name goes forth from the demonination of James, son of Alpheus, given to one of the Twelve. Alpheus and Cleophas are indeed the same name. They differ only by the manner they transcribed into Greek the initial guttural of the word. This James is elsewhere called by St. Paul, "brother of the Lord" (Gal. i. 19). Another Apostle, St. Jude, was also a son of Mary of Cleophas. This Jude was a brother of James (Luke vi. 16; Acts i. 13). He was the third brother or first cousin of the Lord (Jude 1). A fourth son of Mary of Cleophas is known to us as such, thanks to the accounts which we possess already, through a passage of St. Matthew (xiii. 55), which has its parallel in St. Mark (vi. 3). These two Evangelists, reporting the words of the inhabitants of Nazareth, mention Simon among the brothers of the Lord, with James, Joseph, and Jude. This Simon is not otherwise known to us from the New Testament. Some interpreters confound him with the Apostle Simon the Chanaanite or the Zealot; a great number, with the Simon who became bishop of Jerusalem, in the year 62, after the death of St. James. A precious tradition, preserved by Hegesippus, about the year 150, says, indeed, that after the death of James, they elected with preference, to succeed him in the see of Jerusalem, Simon, his brother, because the other son of Cleophas was, like James, a cousin of the Saviour.

Tradition knows two "sisters" or cousins of Our Lord, but it is wavering and varies about their names: it calls them sometimes Assia and Lydia, sometimes Mary and Salome. To explain the passage of St. Matthew, which reports the following words of the people of

Nazareth: "His brothers . . . and his sisters are they not all with us?" (Matt. xiii. 55–56) they generally suppose the following: the death of St. Joseph, which had taken place, as we can conclude from the silence which the Gospels keep about him, before the beginning of the public life of Our Lord. Mary and Jesus had gone to live with their kinsman Cleophas, so that henceforth the two families formed only one. Others believe that Cleophas died before his brother Joseph, and that his wife and children went to live with the Blessed Virgin. Be this as it may, in every case it remains true that James, Joseph, Simon, and Jude were first cousins of Jesus, not brothers of Jesus in the proper sense of the word.

Renan, however, does not admit the above conclusion. He claims that the Apostles St. James and St. Jude were sons, not of Cleophas, but of St. Joseph. We shall see very soon what we have to hold of the latter affirmation; but, for the present, let us state that he avows, as much as this wavering writer can avow, in a passage which we have reported before, that Jesus was the *only* son of Mary. He says: —

"Jesus had true brothers and true sisters. Only it is possible that these brothers and sisters were only half-brothers and half-sisters. These brothers and sisters, were they also sons and daughters of Mary? This is not probable. The brothers, indeed, appear to have been much older than Jesus. Now Jesus was, as it appears, the firstborn of His mother. Jesus, besides, was in his youth designated at Nazareth by the name of the son of Mary. We have in this regard the testimony of the most historical of the Gospels (Mark vi. 3). This supposes that He was for a long time known as the only son of a widow. . . . Finally, the *myth* of the Virginity of Mary, without excluding absolutely the idea that Mary afterwards had other children by Joseph or that she remarried (!), combines itself better with the hypothesis where she would have had only one son. Certainly, the legend does all violence possible to the reality However, we must remember that the legend in question was worked out in the very circle of the brothers and cousins of Jesus."

Renan admits, therefore, although he does not believe in the Virginity of Mary, that the Blessed Virgin had no other child but

Jesus. The force of the truth must be very great to tear from him a similar avowal and to constrain him to combat thus not only himself, but also Rationalists and Protestants, who make of the personages named in St. Matthew and in St. Mark as "brothers of Jesus," the sons of Mary and of Joseph.

We have already seen that Renan maintains that St. Joseph had several children. This latter point we have to examine: He claims to solve all the obscurities by the ancient texts. "The difficulties arrange themselves, therefore, quite well," he says, "if we suppose a first marriage of Joseph, from which he had sons and daughters, particularly James and Jude." He adds in a foot-note: "This was the tradition of the judaizing Christians, consigned in particular in the Gospel of Peter." Further up, he had already said: "The whole Hierosolymitan tradition distinguishes perfectly the *brothers of the Lord* from the family of Cleophas. . . . Notably, James, brother of the Lord, was not a son of Cleophas (in the prologue of the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, he is expressly called *son of Joseph*). . . . In the Gospel of the Hebrews, which has so often the superiority over the synoptic texts, Jesus directly calls James, *my brother*, a quite exceptional expression and which they certainly would not have employed to designate a first cousin."

Behold all the arguments of Renan. They are all borrowed from apocryphal Gospels. Renan could have added the testimony of some ecclesiastical writers of the first century, like St. Epiphanius. These writers had been deceived by what St. Jerome does not hesitate to call "the foolish reveries of the apocryphals," *deliramenta apocryphorum* (Comm. in Matt. xii. 49). The authors of the apocryphal Gospels themselves, of the Gospel of the Nativity of Mary, of the Gospel of the Childhood of the Saviour, of the History of Joseph, the Carpenter, were probably led into error by a false interpretation of the word *brother* in the canonical Gospels, whose real sense they did not know.

Hence, upon these *deliramenta apocryphorum* Renan founded his opinion. By the most strange overthrow of all criticism, he prefers the testimony of romantic works, whose authority amounts to nothing, to the testimony of St. Matthew and of St. Mark, whose authenticity and veracity cannot be seriously contested. The passage in which he seeks to escape the truth is certainly one

of the most curious that was ever begotten by the spirit of sophism. It logically results from his system that, in the family of Joseph and in that of Cleophas, all the children had similar names. He says: «How can we admit that the two brothers, Joseph and Cleophas, had three or even four sons carrying the same name? Let us examine the list of the four brothers of Jesus given by the synoptics: James, Jude, Simon, Jose. The first two have quite authentic titles to call themselves brothers of the Lord; the two latter have, except in two synoptic passages, no reference to make good this title. Since the two names of *Simon* or *Simeon*, *Jose* or *Joseph*, are found elsewhere in the lists of the sons of Cleophas, we are led to the following hypothesis: the passages of Mark and Matthew, where the four brothers of Jesus are enumerated, contain an oversight; of the four personages named by the synoptics, James and Jude were indeed brothers of Jesus and sons of Joseph, but Simeon and Jose were placed there by error. The author of this small account little minded the exactitude of the material details and, like all the evangelical narrators, except the fourth, was governed by the decay of Semitic parallelism. The need of the phrase would have led him into an enumeration which required four proper nouns. Since he knew only two real brothers of Jesus, he was led to associate with them two of his first cousins.»

What do you believe, attentive reader, of the *Deus ex machina*, «the decay of Semitic parallelism?» The decay permits us to reject the testimony of two contemporary historians, of which the one, at least, personally knew those of whom he speaks! How would Rationalists judge a Catholic theologian offering similar arguments? It seems to us that similar sophisms invincibly prove that the one who is obliged to employ them upholds a false thesis. Taking up again, therefore, the expressions of Renan, we can say with good right: «Since the two names of Simon or Simeon, Jose or Joseph, are found elsewhere in the list of the sons of Clopas,» and since James and Jude are brothers of Simon and Joseph, it shows, as we have said before, that James and Jude are sons of Clopas, or Cleophas, and of Mary, like Simon and Joseph; it results also that these four names being precisely the names of those who are called by the synoptics the brothers of the Lord, those who carried this title were the sons of Cleophas, brother of St. Joseph; that

they were, consequently, not the real brothers of Jesus, but held as His first cousins, because St. Joseph, their uncle, was the reputed father of Our Lord, or His real first cousins, if we admit that Mary, their mother, was a real sister of the Blessed Virgin. The Catholic interpretation of the texts of the New Testament concerning the « brothers of the Lord » is, therefore, the most logical and the only one which renders an account of the texts, and at the same time it is conformable to tradition.

CHAPTER X

THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

I. Authenticity and Integrity of the Acts of The Apostles.— The authenticity of the Acts of the Apostles imposes itself even upon the most severe critics. « The efforts which they made to prove that the third Gospel and the Acts are not of the same author, have remained quite fruitless, » says Renan (*Les Evangiles*, p. 436). The Acts are expressly quoted for the first time in the letter of the Churches of Lyons and of Vienne to the Churches of Asia and Phrygia, in 177; then we find them mentioned by the most of the Fathers and Doctors, St. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen. In the famous passage of his *Church History* wherein he enumerates the writings of the New Testament, Eusebius ranks the Acts of the Apostles among those which are admitted by everybody without contradiction.

The book of the Acts carries, besides, the mark of the time of its composition. « The gaiety, the youthfulness of heart which these evangelical odyssies breathe, » says Renan, « were something new, original, and charming. The Acts of the Apostles, the expression of the first outburst of Christian conscience, is a book of joy, of serene zeal. Since the Homeric poems, they had not seen a work so full of fresh sensations. A morning breeze, a sea odor, if I may express myself thus, inspiring something brisk and strong, penetrates the whole book and makes an excellent travelling com-

panion, the exquisite breviary of the one who pursues ancient traces on the south seas. It was the second poetry of Christianity. The Lake of Tiberiades and its fisher-barges had furnished the first" (*St Paul*, p. 12–13). "The prefaces of the two writings (the third Gospel and the Acts), the dedication of both to Theophilus, the perfect likeness of style and ideas furnish . . . abundant proofs" (*Les Apotres*, p. 10) that St. Luke composed the history of the foundation of the Churches, as well as the history of its founder, and it is useless to insist on this any farther.

As to the integrity of the Acts, the change of authorship they have alleged against them we notice in the second part of the book — beginning with chapter xvi. 10 — where the author speaks in the first person, but this objection is without value. They have supposed "that the passages wherein is found the pronoun *we*, have been copied by the last author of the Acts from an anterior writing, from the original memoirs of a disciple of Paul, by Timothy for instance, and that the author, through inadvertence, had forgotten to substitute the name of the narrator for *we*. This explanation, says Renan, is hardly admissible. We could understand such a negligence in a rough compilation. But the third Gospel and the Acts form a work carefully composed, drawn up with reflection and even with skill, written by one and the same hand, and according to a plan. Both books form a whole absolutely of the same style, presenting the same favorite expressions and the same manner in quoting Scripture. Such a shocking fault of authorship as that in question would be inexplicable. We are, therefore, invincibly led to conclude that the one who wrote the end of the work also wrote its beginning and that the narrator of the whole is the one who says *we* in the before quoted passages" (*Les Apotres*, pp. 10–12). The integrity of the Acts offers, therefore, no more difficulty than their authenticity.

II. Veracity of the Acts of the Apostles.—The author of the Acts was perfectly acquainted with all that he relates. Of all the books of Scripture, none has such a vast field and is so little familiar to the Jews. St. Luke leads us into Syria, Asia Minor, Cyprus, Greece, and Italy. His account is full of allusions to history, morals, customs, and religion of the people who live in these different countries, to the usages even of navigation in his time; and among these so varied subjects, among that mass of details,

he moves with the greatest ease, and expresses himself about persons, places, and things with an exactitude which only an ocular, intelligent, attentive, instructed, and conscientious witness can possess. Every time it is possible to check his narrative by profane sources, and the case often presents itself, the proof is entirely in his favor. His enemies have been able to attack him only on three points, which, however, by a curious singularity, have reference to Jewish history and not to foreign history.

Aside from these episodes, Rationalists have nothing to point out in a book so full of facts, and, to contest its historical value, they are obliged to maintain that the author knowingly altered the events which he relates, in order to give them a signification which they have not in reality. We shall answer successively each of these accusations.

The first who questioned the veracity of the author of the Acts was Frisch, in 1817. In 1836, Schrader contested the credibility of some parts of the Acts on account of the divergences which he believed to discover between the accounts of St. Luke and those of St. Paul. But only in 1838 commenced, with Christian Baur, the real war against the Acts of the Apostles. The Chief of the School of Tubingen maintained that this writing had been composed by a partisan of St. Paul, in order to gain the partisans of St. Peter, and that, with this view, the author had traced pictures of imaginary concord, instead of the real discord which had divided the two Apostles, he showed between them a perfect, ideal harmony. Schneckenburger adopted and developed this system with some skill. Other critics added new accusations to the foregoing: they maintained that the book of the Acts contained contradictions and formal historical errors.

The errors they claim to discover in the Acts are the following: The author is mistaken about the date of the revolt of Theudas and about the circumstances of an insurrection excited by an Egyptian; moreover it is not credible, as St. Luke pretends, that St. Paul, interrogated by the high-priest at Jerusalem, did not know the dignity of the one to whom he had to answer.

As to the subject of the first difficulty, Renan, speaking of St. Luke, affirms without hesitation: "He commits chronological errors. Before Judas the Gaulonite, the Acts mention another agitator, Theudas; but this is an anachronism; the movement of

Theudas took place in the year 44 of the Christian era." (*Vie de Jesus.*)

Thus, according to Rationalists, St. Luke was certainly mistaken; but the truth is: Gamaliel, member of the Sanhedrin, in the discourse which he pronounces in favor of the Apostles brought before the great council of the Jews, says among other things, in speaking of various revolts: *Before these days rose up Theodas, affirming himself to be somebody, to whom a number of men, about four hundred, joined themselves: who was slain; and all that believed him were scattered, and brought to nothing. After this man, rose up Judas of Galilee* (Acts v. 36–37). The latter is mentioned by Josephus in the same epoch as by Gamaliel (*Ant. Jud* XVIII., i. 1); therefore, they do not raise any difficulty as to this subject, but it is not the same for Theudas, of whom the Pharisee orator also speaks, according to Rationalistic critics. The Theudas mentioned by Gamaliel lived at a date anterior to that of Judas of Galilee. Now the revolter of this name of whom there is question in the *Jewish Antiquities* and who must be the same, infidels claim, revolted only about ten years after this discourse of Gamaliel, under Cuspius Fadus. Therefore, there is an anachronism in the Acts.

If there really were a contradiction between the two historians, nothing would oblige us to give right to Josephus against St. Luke. The first has been often found at fault; they have established numerous inexactitudes and even formal contradictions between his *Jewish Antiquities* and *War of the Jews*, whilst the author of the Acts proves a wonderful exactitude in all the parts of his account which could be verified. For the present case, his testimony merits so much more confidence as he was the companion of St. Paul, who had been himself a disciple of Gamaliel, the orator of the Sanhedrin. But it is not at all established that the Theudas of Josephus and that of St. Luke are one and the same person, and we can admit without difficulty both accounts as equally true. The name alone is common in both writers. Now, two revolters of the same name could very well cause disorders a few years apart. In Josephus even, from the time of the death of Herod I. until the taking of Jerusalem by Titus, we find five conspirators of the name, Simon, and three under the name Judas: Judas, of Galilee, called also the Gaulonite, of whom Gamaliel speaks; Judas, son of Ezechias; and

Judas, son of Saphore. In spite of the great number of revolters whose memory the Jewish historian has preserved, it is possible and even quite probable that he has not enumerated them all. Theudas may be of the number of those whom he has omitted. However, it is not certain that he passed him by in silence. Ussher has justly remarked that the *Jehudah* of the Hebrews is the *Theudah* of the Syrians, and that these two forms of the same name were easily exchanged in the language of the country: thus the apostle Jude of St. Luke is the Thadeus of St. Mark, and it is philologically established that the Arameans had a marked predilection for dental sounds and substituted them regularly for hissing sounds, so that the city of Sur, was for them *Tur*, from which our Tyre is derived. The Theudas of the Acts may, therefore, be one of the Judas of Josephus, for instance, Judas son of Ezechias. Consequently, nothing authorizes us to accuse St. Luke of any error in the discourse which he reports of Gamaliel.

What is said further on in regard to an Egyptian is not erroneous either. When St. Paul was led before the tribune Lysias, in Jerusalem, this one asked him: *Art not thou that Egyptian who before these days didst raise a tumult, and didst lead forth into the desert four thousand men that were murderers?* (Acts xxi. 38.) If St. Luke could be well instructed about the facts which he reports, it was certainly what concerned the captivity of his master St. Paul. But Josephus does not relate this episode in the same manner, whence it follows, in the eyes of critics, that the author of the Acts of the Apostles is certainly mistaken.

Unfortunately for them, Josephus has twice related the revolt of an Egyptian, but his accounts do not agree. According to the *War of the Jews*, this foreigner, making himself pass as a prophet, gained over three thousand men and led them from the desert on Mount of Olives, from where he threatened Jerusalem. The inhabitants of the city spontaneously united with the Romans to combat him; he was forced to take to flight; the most of those who accompanied him perished or were captured, the rest were dispersed. On the contrary, according to the *Jewish Antiquities*, the Egyptian seduced the multitude and dragged them along upon Mount of Olives by the promise that the walls of Jerusalem would fall before him. The procurator Felix unmasked the false prophet; he attacked him upon Mount of Olives, killed four hundred of the

rebels and made two hundred prisoners; their seducer succeeded in escaping. Thus the thirty thousand men which were mostly killed in the *War of the Jews* notably diminish: there were only four hundred victims. "It would be easier," M. Wallon correctly remarks, "to reconcile St. Luke with Josephus than the two accounts of Josephus with one another. The number of the book of the Acts answers better than that of the *War of the Jews* as to the number of men killed or captured in this rout, according to the *Antiquities*. Besides, let us remark, that he does not contradict the number of those who followed the Egyptian, according to the first account of Josephus, for St. Luke, speaking of murderers, designates the highwaymen enrolled by the Egyptian; Josephus, in the thirty thousand men of the first account, evidently included the multitude that joined their troop. For the rest, the accord is perfect. This Egyptian, who is not named by either of the authors, makes his attempt under the government of Felix, Josephus tells us. It is also under Felix that St. Paul is arrested; and it can be seen that the other event was yet quite recent (Acts xxi. 38). Josephus says that the Egyptian escaped: this also goes forth from the account of St. Luke, because the tribune asks St. Paul whether he is not that Egyptian; and the wrath which the people showed towards him supported this conjecture, because we know through Josephus that the people, against their habit, showed themselves hostile to this false prophet." (*L'autorite de l'Evangile*, p. 136.)

The third difficulty which they allege against the veracity of the Acts has hardly any value. When the high-priest Ananias had caused St. Paul to be beaten before the Sanhedrin, the Apostle complained of being beaten contrarily to the law. The assistants cried out that he was wanting in respect to the Pontiff. *I knew not, brethren*, St. Paul answered, *that he is the high-priest* (Acts xxiii. 2–5). It is not credible, infidels claim, that the Apostle did not know the high-priest. Nothing is, however, easier to explain. Ananias, son of Zebedee, exercised the sovereign pontificate in the time of the Council of Jerusalem, at which St. Paul assisted, but he was deposed shortly after and sent as a prisoner to Rome by Quadratus, legate of Syria. Claudius decided in favor of Ananias and consequently he had to be set at liberty; but, during his absence, he had been replaced. Jonathan, his successor,

was killed by order of Felix, before the revolt of the Egyptians and before the arrest of St. Paul. At the moment when the Apostle was led before him, the sovereign pontificate was without a titulary (cf. Josephus, *Ant. Jud.* VIII, v. 8). Ananias, in the quality of ancient high-priest, fulfilled certain functions of the pontificate during the vacancy, which explains to us why he presides over the Sanhedrin, and also why the Apostle was ignorant of his being high-priest; he was not this in fact. St. Paul, therefore, without discussing his title, was perfectly right in saying that he did not know he spoke to the Pontiff.

It can be seen from the foregoing how insignificant and without foundation are the reproaches which rationalistic criticism addresses to St. Luke. But, they bring up against him a graver accusation. Baur and his followers, being unable to find the sacred author at fault in what he relates, attacks his intentions; they accuse him of having purposely altered the facts and represented them under false colors. In order to explain in a natural manner the origin of Christianity, they pretend that the Acts are a partisan writing, composed with a view of reconciling two opposed factions that had formed themselves among the disciples of Christ, that of Peter and that of Paul. Although they are agreed to-day in rejecting the most of the theories which the School of Tubingen had begotten, many Rationalists, among others Renan, still have recourse to this means in order to bring into discredit the work of St. Luke. Listen what Renan says:

"The spirit of the Acts is the same as that of the third Gospel: kindness, tolerance, reconciliation, sympathy for the humble, aversion for the proud. . . . His book is the first document of the spirit of the Roman Church, indifferent to the truth of things, dominated in everything by official tendencies. Luke is the founder of that eternal fiction what we call Church history, with its insipidity, its habit of smoothing all the angles, its sillily sanctimonious windings. The dogma *a priori* of an always wise and moderate Church is the basis of its account. The essential for him is to show that the disciples of Paul are disciples, not of an intruder, but of an Apostle like the others, who has been in perfect communion with the others. The rest is of little importance for him. All took place like in an idyl. Peter, at the bottom, was of the same opinion as Paul, Paul of the same opinion as Peter.

. . . From the point of historical value, two absolutely distinct parts must be made in the Acts, according as Luke relates the facts of the life of Paul with which he was personally acquainted, or according as he presents to us the agreed theory of his time about the first years of the Church of Jerusalem. These first years were like a distant mirage, full of illusions. Luke did not understand the world in which he lived."

Behold phrases and even injuries; but what are the proofs? Renan dares to tell us that St. Luke, the companion of St. Paul, who lived in the same time as the Apostles, and with the Apostles, "did not understand the world in which he lived." And a critic who lives eighteen hundred years afterwards is better situated to understand that world in which he lived, is better able to judge the historians that made it known to us, and to sort out what they said as true and false! O comedy of science!

Modern criticism has discovered neither a new document nor a new text; it knows only what they always knew; how, therefore, can it be better instructed about the events than the contemporaries themselves? It pretends to be correctly informed, because it interprets the ancient texts after its own way, that is, in falsifying and altering them. Behold this interpretation, as it is given by Renan:

"The capital point of the subject that occupies us, that which furnishes a ray of light to criticism in this difficult question of the historical value of the Acts, is the comparison of passages in regard to the affair of circumcision in the Acts (xv.) and in the Epistle to the Galatians (ii.). According to the Acts, brethren of Judea having come to Antioch, and having maintained the necessity of circumcision for the pagan converts, a committee composed of Paul, Barnabas, and several others, is sent from Antioch to Jerusalem to consult the Apostles and the Ancients about this question. They are received with eagerness by everybody; a great assembly took place. The dissent hardly shows itself, suppressed as it is under the effusions of a mutual charity and under the happiness of finding themselves together. Peter states the opinion which they expected to find in the mouth of Paul, namely, that the pagan converts are not subject to the Mosaic law. James brings forward in support of this opinion only a very slight restriction. Paul does not speak, and he really does not need to speak, because his doctrine is

enounced by Peter. The opinion of the brethren of Judea is upheld by nobody. A solemn decree is carried conformably to the opinion of James. This decree is made known to the Churches by deputies expressly chosen.

"Let us compare now the account of Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians. Paul wants the voyage which he made this time to Jerusalem to be looked upon as the effect of a spontaneous movement, and even as the result of a revelation. Arrived at Jerusalem, he communicates his Gospel to whom it may concern; he has, especially, interviews with those who appear to be considerable personages. He is not criticised at all; they communicate nothing to him; only they ask him to remember the poor of Jerusalem. When Titus, who accompanies him, consents to be circumcised, it is through regard 'of false brethren.' Paul makes this passing concession to them, but does not submit himself to them. As to the important men, Paul speaks of them only with a kind of bitterness and irony, — they have taught him nothing new. Moreover, Cephas having come later on to Antioch, Paul 'resists him to the face, because he is wrong.' Indeed, at first Cephas ate with all indiscriminately. Emissaries of James arrive; Peter hides himself and avoids the circumcised. 'Seeing that he did not walk in the right path of the truth of the Gospel,' Paul addresses him before the public and reproaches him bitterly with his conduct.

"The difference can be seen. On the one hand, a solemn accord; on the other, poorly suppressed wrath, and extreme irritabilities. On the one side, a kind of council; on the other, nothing that resembles it. On the one side, a formal decree carried by an acknowledged authority; on the other, different opinions are upheld. It is useless to tell what version merits the preference. The account of the Acts is hardly probable, because, according to this account, the council had for occasion a dispute of which we find no trace any more as soon as the council is assembled. The two orators hold discourses, and the decree which the council is believed to have carried is certainly a fiction." (*Les Apotres*, pp. 34–37.)

Behold the accusation against St. Luke presented with a treacherous skill; his veracity is rendered suspicious by quite an artificial arrangement of the facts; history is completely altered by means of some omissions and some additions which, considered singly,

appear to be of little value, but which are learnedly combined to produce upon the reader the desired impression. Nothing, however, is easier than to justify the author of the Acts.

In the first place, he did not seek to alter the truth to reconcile the followers of St. Peter and of St. Paul. He thinks so little of pointing out the apostolate of St. Paul at the expense of historical exactitude, that he himself furnishes the strongest argument one could allege against his mission, if it had been contested as modern infidels claim. St. Luke relates, indeed, that right away after the Ascension, when there was question of completing the apostolic college and of electing a new member in the place of the traitor Judas, St. Peter indicated before hand, as a condition of the choice to be made, that the elected must have accompanied the Saviour *beginning from the baptism of John until the day wherein he was taken up from them* (Acts i. 21, 22). St. Paul did not fulfil this condition. Later on, after his conversion, the Acts report again that St. Peter, in another discourse, calls "pre-ordained witnesses of the resurrection" of Christ *those who did eat and drink with Christ after he arose again from the dead* (Acts x. 41). St. Paul had not eaten and drunk with Christ risen. Nothing, however, obliged St. Luke to insert these words in his writing. If he did, it was because he was not at all preoccupied with what one attributes to him, and he was guided in the choice of the details solely by the desire to tell the truth.

So also, is he so far from the thought of flattering the Judaizing Christians in order to bring them to an understanding with the Hellenizing Christians, that he constantly reminds us of the obstinacy and stubbornness of the Jews, which he certainly would have avoided if he had been filled with the intentions of which they accuse him so falsely. Already in his first discourses, St. Peter reproaches the Jews with everything they had done against the Saviour (Acts ii. 23). St. Stephen treats them as stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart who always resist the Holy Ghost (vii. 51). St. Paul himself applies to them the words of Isaias: *The heart of this people is grown gross; and with their ears have they heard heavily, and their eyes they have shut, lest perhaps they should see* (xxviii. 26, 27). How can one maintain that the Acts which, in reporting his discourses, spare so little the Jews and reproach them with their prejudices, are a writing of reconciliation,

a work destined to bring on the Judaizing Christians to the ideas of St. Paul?

But, they will say, be it as it may with the language of St. Luke, it remains nevertheless true that the author of the Acts presents the reports of St. Peter and of St. Paul under a quite different light than St. Paul does himself. Whilst the historian of the Council of Jerusalem shows us both Apostles in perfect harmony, the Epistle to the Galatians attests that they were separated from one another by the gravest dissents.

Some commentators have cut short all difficulty as to this subject by denying the antagonism of St. Peter and St. Paul. They have maintained that the Cephas of the Epistle to the Galatians, whom the Apostle of the Gentiles "resisted to the face," was not the head of the Apostolic college, but a disciple who bore the same name. We will not give this explanation, because we do not believe it well founded; we shall try to prove this further on, when we come to the Epistle where St. Paul relates what they have called the conflict of Antioch. Besides, it is easy to prove that the objections accumulated by the School of Tubingen and by Renan support themselves only upon equivocations and upon a false exposition. To refute them, it is sufficient to present with order the sequel of the facts; thus they disappear by themselves.

When the Apostles commenced to preach Christianity, the question of the conversion of the Gentiles did not delay to present itself. Should they receive them into the new Church? If they received them, should they oblige them to observe the legal prescriptions of the Mosaic law and particularly circumcision, as they did for the Gentiles who had become converts to Judaism? Finally, in the case when the newly converted Pagans would be enfranchised from the Jewish practices, would the converted Jews themselves remain subject to them? These were very grave points, from the solution of which depended the future of the rising religion. They were successively solved, with the greatest wisdom and conformably to the spirit of the Gospel and of Jesus Christ.

As it always happens in similar cases, there were some, among the new Christians, who expressed themselves about all these points for the affirmative, and others, on the contrary, for the negative. The most ardent among the Pharisees showed themselves exclusive. All the Apostles, without exception, declared themselves in favor

of the Gentiles and for their enfranchisement from the Mosaic law. This goes clearly forth from the exposition of the facts. There was, in spite of all they may have said, no division in regard to the principles to be set up and to be followed, among the Apostles and St. Paul; there were, in other words, no Petrinians and Paulinians; St. Peter and St. James were of the same opinion as St. Paul. It is only confounding the facts if they throw some obscurity on such a clear question.

The first point to solve was naturally that of the admission of the Gentiles into the new Church. In principle it could offer no serious embarrassment, because the Saviour had given to His disciples the formal order to preach His Gospel to every creature (Mark xvi. 15; Matt. xxviii. 19; Acts i. 8). But in practice it should suffer some difficulties. All the first converts, without exception, were Jews. Now, such was the antipathy of the Jews for all that did not belong to the race of Abraham (Acts x. 28), that which was clear by the law had to shock in its application ardent and exaggerated minds. One does not break so easily with inveterated prejudices. The dispositions and sentiments modify themselves and change in man only gradually; it needed, therefore, a certain time for the most of the first Jewish Christians to accustom themselves to the thought to accept the Gentiles, the *goim*, into their bosom. All did itself gradually and step by step.

The first step was the conversion of the Samaritans (Acts viii.). It does not appear that it raised any special difficulty, because the Samaritans were circumcised and observed the Law. It was not the same in trying to make the second step, that of preaching the Gospel to the uncircumcised. The details into which St. Luke enters (Acts x., xi.) to prepare, explain and justify in some sort the admission of the first converted Gentile, the centurion Cornelius, into the bosom of the new Church, show very well that the Judaizing Christians did not look favorably upon them among their ranks. Nothing less was needed than supernatural intervention to make the Jewish Christians to understand that it was the will of God that all men should come to the true faith. Only the miracles which took place in that time can silence the opponents and oblige them to conclude that God really calls the pagans to the faith.

Some particular circumstances merit to be noted in this capital event: the first Gentile admitted into the Church is in Judea itself,

at Cesarea; it is St. Peter, the one whom modern critics represent as opposed to the ideas of St. Paul about the universality of Christianity, who receives him in the name of God and baptizes him; finally, the conversion of Cornelius, which solves this grave question of the admission of the Gentiles into the Church, before the conversion of the Apostle St. Paul, and, consequently, the influence of the latter did not contribute anything towards it.

Hence a first question was solved; all men were called to form part of the Church of Christ. However, not all the difficulties were removed; new ones will present themselves. Henceforth, no voice will raise itself against the conferring of baptism upon pagans; but how should they be treated after baptism? The new Church is now composed of two different elements, the one coming from the Synagogue, the other from Polytheism. Will the first absorb the second? Will the Gentiles be Judaized? The question was posed, and it will be the same in the entire history of the Church, only when it was raised by the facts themselves.

Since the preliminary question of the admission of the pagans into the Church had been solved by the conversion of Cornelius, St. Paul had commenced his apostolate, and had already converted many Gentiles, chiefly at Antioch. Nobody was opposed to their entering the Church, but, as the manner of treating them had not yet been regulated, a new difficulty arose. St. Paul, with his great practical sense and deeply penetrated with the spirit of Jesus Christ, was careful to hold the pagans he had brought to the faith to the observances of the Mosaic Law. The same Israelites, who first wished to exclude them from the Kingdom of God, now wished to subject them at least to their observances. On the one hand, the Jews converted to Christianity, desired to force the converted Gentiles to subject themselves to the legal prescriptions, particularly to circumcision (Acts xv. 1); on the other hand, the converted pagans, upheld by St. Paul, refused to submit themselves to this. The affair became a grave one. To solve the difficulty they resolved to bring it before the Apostles at Jerusalem. Thus it became the occasion of the first Council. St. Peter and St. James, whom they give as the representatives of the Judaizing tendency, express themselves, as well as all the other Apostles, in favor of the Gentiles, and ruled that they were not bound to the Mosaic observances. The account of St. Luke is clear and precise; it exposes all the phases of the quarrel and of the solution;

and he reports the Letter which the Apostles wrote to the Christians of Antioch to put an end to the discussions. He shows a perfect accord among all the Apostles. Rationalists refuse to admit this; but the succession of the facts clearly confirms the exactitude of the account of St. Luke, for the events develop themselves and follow their course in the most logical and most natural manner.

Indeed, the second question being regulated, all is not yet finished. The Council of Jerusalem had decided that the converted Gentiles were not bound to observe the law of Moses, but the Council did not occupy itself with the obligations or liberty which the converted Jews might have in this regard. Hence there could arise from this head new uncertainties and new embarrassments, and which effectively did arise. For the Christians of Jewish origin living in Palestine the rule of conduct they ought to follow was simple and clear: they ought to continue to observe the law of Moses, in order not to scandalize their brethren, not to appear as living like Gentiles, and not to put themselves into the impossibility of communicating with them. This was such a natural thing that St. Paul himself did not hesitate to have Timothy, the son of a Jew and of a Gentile, circumcised on account of the Jews of Asia Minor (Acts xvi. 3), and he personally observed the legal prescriptions as much as possible, although he did not believe himself bound to this, because they could not bind him any more than the Gentiles. He himself says, what Rationalists forget, that he became *to the Jews a Jew, that I might gain the Jews, to them that are under the law, as if I were under the law, (whereas myself was not under the law), that I might gain them that were under the law* (I. Cor. ix. 19–22).

But if this rule of conduct was easy to follow in Judea and among the Jews, it was not the same in a Church composed partly of Jews, and partly of Gentiles. It was, therefore, necessary, on pain of establishing two castes in the new religion, which was inadmissible, either to force the pagan neophytes to observe the Law, or to enfranchise the Jews themselves from the practices of the Law, otherwise it became impossible for the latter to sit at table with the first, on account of the Mosaic prescriptions concerning flesh-meat. Although the Council of Jerusalem had not expressly foreseen this case, it had decided it indirectly by enfranchising the Gentiles from the legal yoke. Since they were freed from it, the Christians of

Jewish origin, who had to live with them, were thereby also freed from it.

St. Peter was in perfect agreement with St. Paul as to this point; also the prince of the Apostles made at first no difficulty, at Antioch, to eat with the pagan neophytes (Gal. ii. 12). This point, in practice, was nevertheless a very delicate one and we can easily imagine how hard it must have been for the Jews, raised in the scrupulous observance of the Law, to cease to keep it. Among these circumstances it needed great care, condescension and tact, not to wound ancient coreligionists, not to hurt too violently the feelings of the converted Jews, but always attached to the ceremonial practices, and to treat neither the pagan neophytes as excommunicated. Jews of Jerusalem, who had St. James for bishop, having arrived, St. Peter, through regard for his compatriots and in order not to hurt their feelings, ceased to frequent the Gentiles and to eat with them.

This conduct weakened in nothing the decisions of the Council of Jerusalem, because, we repeat, it had decided nothing in regard to this subject. However, the example being given by the chief of the Church, it might have serious consequences. St. Paul measured at a glance the fatal consequences which this practical concession made to the prejudiced Jews could have, and he publicly remonstrated against the behavior of the prince of the Apostles (Gal. ii. 11). The latter understood that the objection was well founded, as the text of the Epistle to the Galatians supposes without expressly saying so; he gave in, and thus the last question concerning the obligation of the Jewish law in regard to both Jews and Gentiles in the Christian Church was definitely solved. It can be seen that there was never between St. Peter and St. James, on the one hand, and St. Paul on the other, any divergence of principles; on the contrary, there was a perfect understanding about the first two points, and, as to the third, there was difference only in the manner of applying it; a difference which soon ceased after the remark of St. Paul.

Finally, it can be seen that there is no discord between the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistle to the Galatians. Only in confounding and altering the facts can one not discover, but create, between these two writings a contradiction which does not exist. St. Luke speaks as historian, St. Paul relates of the Council of Jerusalem only what becomes his subject, but the accord, as

to the foundation of things, is complete. The conduct of St. Peter, living and eating with Gentiles, before the arrival of Jews from Jerusalem, as St. Paul teaches us, explains itself only through the decision which had been taken at Jerusalem; the absence of a formal and express decision concerning the cessation of the obligation of the Mosaic law for the Christians coming from the synagogue, also explains to us the embarrassment and the great prudence of the prince of the Apostles, when he was afraid to scandalize his brethren from Judea. The whole interlinks itself perfectly, and the result of all the inquiries of true criticism is in favor of the veracity of St. Luke. Not only the Epistle to the Galatians, but all the Epistles of St. Paul, far from contradicting the Acts, plainly confirm them, now, in completing the account, for instance, when these letters teach us that it was by order of the ethnarch of Aretas that they guarded the gates of Damascus in order to hinder St. Paul from escaping (II. Cor. xi. 32), now in explaining themselves mutually, as Paley has shown by numerous examples. Thus St. Luke tells us that Timothy was the son of a Christian Jewess and of a Greek father (II. Tim. i. 5), which explains to us why St. Paul praises the faith of the mother and of the ancestor of Timothy and says nothing of his father, etc.

THE EPISTLES AND APOCALYPSE

CHAPTER I

EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL

THE EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS AND THE CORINTHIANS

I. Epistle to the Romans. — The Epistles of the Apostle St. Paul present a certain number of difficulties, but the authenticity of some is so evident that they have the privilege of being the only writings of the New Testament that are not contested by infidel critics. However, not all of them escape their attacks and and they even reject the most of them.

Rationalists admit as authentic the Epistles to the Galatians, to the Corinthians and to the Romans; the most of them question or even deny the Paulinian origin of all the others; they regard as being probably from St. Paul the Epistles to the Thessalonians, to the Philipians, to Philemon, and, in a less degree, the Epistle to the Colossians; the Epistle to the Ephesians is doubtful; the letters to Titus and to Timothy are, according to them, certainly apocryphal; finally, the Epistle to the Hebrews has been falsely attributed to St. Paul; it was composed by another disciple. We shall refute their objections in studying each of the letters of the great Apostle. Let us commence by answering to the difficulties which they raise about the Epistle to the Romans.

This Epistle is placed, in our editions of the New Testament, at the head of all the writings left to us from St. Paul, on account of its importance, but it is of a less ancient date than the two Epistles

to the Thessalonians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians and the Epistle to the Galatians.

The Ebionites, at the beginning of Christianity, rejected the Epistle to the Romans like all the other letters of St. Paul. In the last century, its authenticity was attacked in England by Evanson, and in our days, in Germany, by Bruno Bauer, but rationalistic criticism itself has acknowledged that the Paulinian origin of this writing cannot be questioned. It is, therefore, useless to stop to prove a truth accepted by all.

However, we have to say a few words about its integrity and show that the last two chapters are authentic, because Christian Baur and his disciples, Schwegler and Zeller, claim, after Marcion, that they are not from St. Paul. The reasons on which they support themselves are vain. The one who wrote the end of this Epistle, they say, seeks to reconcile the converted Jews, which St. Paul would never have done, and which is in contradiction with the rest of the letter.

Nothing is more false; St. Paul wishes to gain the Jews as well as the Gentiles in the whole of his Epistle, and there is so little opposition between the diverse parts that the same thoughts are found at the beginning as at the end. This made Renan say: «Must we, with Marcion and with Baur, declare apocryphal the last two chapters of the Epistle to the Romans? We are surprised that such a skilful critic as Baur contented himself with such a gross solution. Why should a falsifier have invented such insignificant details? Why should he have added to the sacred work a list of proper nouns? In the first and second century, the apocryphal authors had almost all a dogmatic interest.» (*Saint Paul*, pp. 71–72.)

II. The Epistles to the Corinthians. — The authenticity of the two Epistles to the Corinthians is universally admitted. «The Epistles of St. Paul have an advantage without equal . . . ,» says Renan, «it is their absolute authenticity. No doubt was ever raised by serious criticism against the authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Romans.» (*Op. cit.*) The integrity of the Epistles to the Corinthians is also unquestionable. «The authentic Epistles have never been interpolated. The style of the Apostle is so individual, so original, that all addition would detach itself from the text by its paleness.» (*Op. cit.*)

They have made the attempt to draw from the first Epistle to the Corinthians a proof against the exactitude of the Acts of the Apostles. They have claimed that St. Paul did not mind the prescriptions of the Council of Jerusalem, and that, consequently, this Council did not exist, for, say they, the letter of the Apostle forbids to eat flesh-meat offered to idols; now, the Doctor of the nations, in his Epistles, seems to attach no importance to this. « If the decree reported, Acts xv. had some reality,» says Renan, « Paul had a very simple means to put an end to the debate (with St. Peter), namely, to quote it. Now, all that he says supposes the nonexistence of this decree. In 57 A. D., Paul, writing to the Corinthians, ignores the same decree and even violates its prescriptions. The decree ordains the abstaining from flesh-meat offered to idols. Paul, on the contrary, is of the opinion that they could eat of this meat, if it did not scandalize anybody, but that one must abstain from it in case one gives scandal in doing so.» (*Les Apotres*, p. 37.)

This is a false exposition. In reality, St. Paul forbids to eat the flesh-meat offered to idols, like the Council of Jerusalem, but he gives reasons for his defense, and his reasons are very correct. In itself, he says, there could not be any objection made in nourishing ourselves with it, because idols are nothing, but nevertheless we must abstain from it, because some attach to it a superstitious sense. These cannot eat it, because they would partake in an idolatrous act. Neither should others eat of it, in order not to scandalize the weak. St. Paul, therefore, contradicts in nothing the Council of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER II

EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE GALATIANS

I. The Cephas of the Epistle to the Galatians. — The authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians is questioned by nobody, but rationalistic criticism seeks to exploit it in order to destroy the Acts of the Apostles. « Every time we are permitted

to check the account of the Acts," says Renan, "we find it at fault and systematical. The control, indeed, which we cannot require from synoptic texts, we can require from the Epistles of Paul, especially from the Epistle to the Galatians. It is clear that, in the case where the Acts and the Epistles are in discord, the preference must be always given to the Epistles, texts of an absolute authenticity, more ancient, of a complete sincerity, and without legends." We shall show that there exists no contradiction between the Acts and the Epistles, after having first established that the Cephas whom St. Paul resists, according to the account which he gives to the Galatians, is really the Apostle St. Peter, although some Catholic commentators maintain the contrary.

St. Paul, in speaking of a personage whom he calls Cephas, relates, in the Epistle to the Galatians, that he *withstood him to the face* (Gal. ii. 11). This Cephas must have had a real importance since the Apostle of the nations, whose zeal knew no obstacle, quoted as a trait of energy the fact of having resisted him. Also, most of the Fathers and commentators have believed, at all times, that this personage was no other than St. Peter, whose Aramaic name was Cephas, indeed. Nevertheless, as St. Paul writes not only that he *withstood him to the face,* but that he resisted him *because he was to be blamed*, there have been for a long time interpreters who cannot believe that this Cephas is the head of the Church, and they maintain that he is one of the seventy-two disciples. Rationalists, in accord this time with the majority of Catholics, do not doubt, on the contrary, that Cephas is St. Peter. According to our view, it is the only opinion which can be defended and we do not hesitate to acknowledge it.

The Fathers are about unanimous as to this point. The name Cephas is found for the first time, outside the New Testament, in the first Epistle of St. Clement, Pope, to the Corinthians, about the year 96. Making allusion to the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians (i. 12), the Pontiff says to them: "It is certainly through the inspiration of the Holy Ghost that he addressed to you a letter where he speaks of him, of Cephas and of Apollo" (St. Clement *Ep. ad Cor.*). And what he adds shows that by Cephas he understands the apostle St. Peter. Also, later on, in supporting himself undoubtedly upon this contemporary testimony of the Apostles, and emanating from the pen of a man who had known them, St. Jerome affirmed

that he knew only one Cephas, Peter, the head of the Church. (*Comm. in Ep. ad Gal.*)

St. Irenæus, bishop of Lyons, about 135–202, in his famous work, *Against Heresies*, and Tertullian, about 160–240, in his treatise *On Prescription*, see, without hesitation, the prince of the Apostles in the personage of whom there is question in the Epistle to the Galatians. St. Cyprian, who died in 258, did not believe any different. In one of his letters, he quotes St. Peter as a model of patience, on account of the docility with which he accepted the admonishment of St. Paul. Such was in that time the belief of the Church of Africa. St. Chrysostom, St. Jerome and St. Augustine, living about the same time as the foregoing Fathers, were perfectly in accord as to the identity of St. Peter and of Cephas. The ecclesiastical writers of the fifth century had no other sentiment: — St. Cyril of Alexandria; Cassian; Theodoret, bishop of Cyra; Pope Gelasius I., who occupied the papal chair from 492 to 496. In the sixth century, St. Gregory the Great says in one of his *Homilies on Ezechiel:* "There are some who pretend that it was not Peter, the prince of the Apostles, but another of the same name, that was blamed by St. Paul. If they had read more carefully the words of St. Paul, they would not express themselves thus."

Thus, during the first six centuries of the Church, all the writers who occupied themselves with the subject in question have recognized St. Peter in the Cephas of the Epistle to the Galatians, with the exception of Clement of Alexandria in a work without historical value, and of a forger who had manufactured, under the name of Dorotheus of Tyre, the apocryphal catalogue of the Disciples of the Saviour.

The Scholastics did not believe any different than the Fathers. During the entire Middle Ages, we do not meet with one single writer who does not identify St. Peter as the Cephas of the Epistle to the Galatians.

Cephas, the disciple, found only partisans after the rise of Protestantism. Catholics then had to defend against the new heretics the infallibility and the dignity of St. Peter. Several among them believed it the best means to justify the head of the Church in this circumstance, to maintain that there was not question of St. Peter; but the most prudent and most cautious were very careful to claim for their solution only a pure probability.

As to the infallibility of the Pope, it is no more interested in the question than is the veracity of the Acts of the Apostles. We have already seen that there was no discord of doctrine, but only of conduct, between St. Peter and St. Paul. The Council of Jerusalem had decided that the converted pagans were not obliged to submit themselves to circumcision and to the legal observances; it had nothing prescribed as to the subject of Judeo-Christians. The latter, therefore, were at liberty to do as they pleased. They were free to continue to observe the law, because it was difficult to break abruptly with old customs, and those among them who lived in Judea could not place themselves outside of all their social, religious and civil usages. For this motive St. Paul caused the circumcision of his disciple Timothy. The synagogue should be buried with honor. But if it was permitted to the Judeo-Christians to subject themselves to the legal prescriptions, they were not obliged to this. There where the Hellenic element dominated in the new Church, the decision of the Council of Jerusalem had to cause a quick abandonment of the Mosaic observances. It was this which took place at Antioch. Since the converted pagans formed there the majority, the Judeo-Christians soon abandoned there the Jewish customs.

In this state of things, it was quite natural that St. Peter, on arriving at the capital of Syria, lived there with the uncircumcised Christians, contrary to the Jewish customs, and had with them the relations which he had already with the centurion Cornelius. What he did, the Epistle to the Galatians tells us. St. Paul, at Jerusalem, lived like the Jews; St. Peter, at Antioch, lived like the Gentiles. But an unforeseen incident came to trouble the good harmony. Judeo-Christians having come from Jerusalem to Antioch, St. Peter found himself in a great embarrassment. There are situations where it is very easy to judge at once what is best to do. No question of principle was at stake; faith was not interested at all, and, nevertheless, the question of conduct was a very delicate one. The newcomers, accustomed to observe the law in Palestine, did not wish, according to the custom of the Jews, to eat with the uncircumcised Christians, and, as we have seen, they had a perfect right to act thus. If St. Peter did not imitate them, he offended his brethren of Jerusalem; if he ceased to eat with the uncircumcised, he offended the new Christians of pagan origin. What could be done in this alternative?

How could the difficulty be solved? Each side had reasons which were not without value. St. Peter was charged with the Gospel of circumcision. In fear, undoubtedly, that the Judeo-Christians would discredit him throughout Palestine and cause him to lose, by accusing him to be wanting in respect towards the law, the esteem which he needed to preach the faith to his brethren, the chief of the Apostles decided to separate himself from the uncircumcised Christians and to live anew as a Jew. Did he hereby commit an error of doctrine? Certainly not. No point of faith was in question. Had he a right to act as he did? Unquestionably, because the Council of Jerusalem had traced in this respect no line of conduct. Jew by birth, he was authorized to observe the law, as St. Paul himself did when he was at Jerusalem. But did he choose the best part, that which offered the least inconvenience, in selecting, in order to avoid scandalizing the Judeo-Christians, what appeared to him a lesser evil?

St. Paul did not think so. Every converted Jew had the right to observe the law, but St. Peter was the head of the Church, and, on account of this quality, his example had a particular weight; he might introduce the belief, by his change of conduct, that the legal ceremonies were always rigorously obligatory for the Jews and not simply optional. These consequences did not delay to manifest themselves. All the converted Jews of the capital of Syria—Barnabas himself, the companion of St. Paul—made it a duty to imitate St. Peter. The importance of his conduct, and the influence which it exercises, show clearly that there is no question here of an unknown disciple, but of the prince of the Apostles. Hence, also, the grievousness of the act. On the part of a simple disciple it would have merited little attention; on the part of St. Peter, it had grievous results; it broke the harmony that reigned in the Christian community of Antioch. The converted pagans, who were the most numerous, found themselves excommunicated, so to speak, and their own bishop, St. Peter, did not dare any longer to have relations with them. They complained and blamed St. Peter; this is the meaning of the Greek text, which does not say, like the Vulgate, that Cephas was "blamable," but that he was "blamed." Then St. Paul took their defense publicly, "to the face"; not in secret, because it was only by a public act that the division introduced at Antioch could cease. In

his Epistle, he characterizes the conduct of the chief of the Apostles as "dissimulation," wishing to tell thereby that St. Peter, although he knew that he could have relations with the uncircumcised, deprived himself thereof as if he had not the right. St. Paul did not contest that the Judeo-Christians could legitimately live as Jews, but he also demanded that the converted Gentiles should not be rejected and oppressed. The Chief of the Church acknowledged the correctness of this claim. He saw the consequences of his conduct, and undoubtedly proclaimed openly that everyone was permitted to have relations with the Hellenist-Christians.

Such is the episode of Antioch; such is the explanation of the account of the Epistle to the Galatians. St. Peter did not err at all in doctrine; his pontifical infallibility is outside the question; he only adopted a line of conduct that had inconveniences; these inconveniences were pointed out by St. Paul and humbly acknowledged by St. Peter. The humility of the prince of the Apostles bore its fruits; this event was decisive; it cut short to all the difficulties which, without this circumstance, would have renewed themselves very often. Both the entirety and the details of the conflict, far from being irreconcilable with the dignity of the Chief of the Church, enhance, on the contrary, his authority and power. They show us the importance of his rôle. All explains itself easily, if there is question of the first Pope; nothing is understood, if there is question of an obscure disciple called Cephas. St. Paul quotes his action as an act of courage; he gave advice to his hierarchical superior,—as St. Bernard will give later on, in his book *On Consideration*, to Pope Eugene III., but his words themselves imply the primacy of Peter, instead of denying it. He said, some time before (Gal. i. 18), that he had gone to Jerusalem to see Peter, or, as the Greek text has it, Cephas, whom he thus considered as his chief. If he now resists him, it is not to disown his authority; his language properly understood is, on the contrary, an homage, so much more precious as it is indirect, rendered to the primacy of the Holy See. The Epistle to the Galatians does not, therefore, contain an attack on the power of St. Peter. Now we shall show that it is not at all in contradiction with the Acts of the Apostles.

II. Accord of the Epistle to the Galatians with the Acts of the Apostles.—They object, in the first place, to the exactitude of the narrative of the Acts which St. Paul, in his Epistle

to the Galatians relates in regard to the dissension that took place between the Christians of Jewish origin and those of pagan origin. They claim that the account of St. Paul differs from that of St. Luke. We have two versions of the same fact, they say, and these two versions are contradictory. Which is the true one? Evidently that of St. Paul, who has been so intimately connected with this quarrel and played the principal rôle therein.

It is certain that St. Paul, in chapter ii. of his Epistle to the Galatians, makes allusion to several facts which St. Luke relates in the Acts, but there exists no contradiction between the two sacred writers. Only St. Luke, writing a history, presents the events as historian, exposing the origin of the quarrel, its diverse aspects and its conclusion, whilst the Apostle of the nations, addressing a letter to the Galatians with a determined view, makes allusion to these events only in so far as it is necessary and useful for his end. In both accounts, Peter and James give right to St. Paul (Acts xv. 7–10; 13–21; Gal. ii. 9); this is the fundamental trait. The rest is accessory and without consequence. St. Paul writes to the Galatians that he had gone to Jerusalem *according to revelation* (Gal. ii. 2), that is, by order of God, whilst, according to St. Luke, this Apostle was sent (Acts xv. 2) into the capital of Judea by the faithful of Antioch. They wish to behold here a contradiction. In reality, there is none. Whatever may be the precise meaning of the original word *apocalupsis*, translated by revelation, a meaning about which the interpreters are not in agreement, it is certain that St. Paul means to say that he went to Jerusalem in obedience to the will of God, which does not contradict at all the account of the Acts. The latter enters, as to the subject of the Council, into details which St. Paul omits, because he has no occasion to speak of them, but both affirm in the same manner that the Apostles gave right to the preacher of the nations, and this is the only essential point.

Rationalistic criticism discovers another contradiction between the Acts and the Epistle of St. Paul. St. Luke says that the Apostle only passed through Galatia (Acts xvi. 6; xviii. 23); but St. Paul by his letter, shows that he stayed for some time in these countries.

The contradiction is only apparent. Renan himself has proved that it is only in the expressions and that both accounts perfectly

agree as to the real facts. "Paul," he says, "was in the habit of making use of the administrative name to designate each country. *Asia*, *Macedonia*, *Achaia*, designate for him the provinces which carried these names, and not the countries which first had carried them. The country which he had evangelized from Antioch of Pisidia to Derbe called itself for him *Galatia;* and the Christians of this country were for him the *Galatians*. Hereby we can explain that unique peculiarity of the Epistle to the Galatians; it carries no address to a determined Church. Hereby we also can explain one of the apparent singularities of the life of St. Paul. The Epistle to the Galatians supposes that Paul had stayed a long time with those to whom this letter is addressed, that he had with them intimate relations, at least as much as with the Corinthians and Thessalonians. Now the Acts do not mention the evangelization of Galatia, properly speaking. In a second voyage, Paul *passes through the country of Galatia*" (Acts xvi. 6). St. Luke understands, thereby, Galatia, properly speaking, which he distinguishes from Pisidia (Acts xiv. 23) and from Lycaonia (xiv. 6), whilst St. Paul understood under the name of Galatia, "an artificial agglomeration, corresponding to the passing reunion of provinces that had been formed under Amyntas, a Galatian king. This personage, after the battles of Philippi and the death of Dejotar, received from Antonius the country of Pisidia, then Galatia, with a porton of Lycaonia and Pamphylia. . . . All these countries, at his death, formed one sole Roman province. The province which carried the name Galatia in the official nomenclature, at least under the first Cæsars, comprised, therefore, certainly: (1) Galatia, properly speaking (2); Lycaonia (3); Pisidia, etc." (E. Renan, *Saint Paul*, pp. 48–49.) Therefore, St. Luke and St. Paul do not contradict themselves; their apparent divergence is even a proof of the perfect exactitude of both, because both express themselves in a very correct manner, although in a different way.

CHAPTER III

THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS, THE PHILIPPIANS, AND THE COLOSSIANS

I. The Epistle to the Ephesians. — Rationalists deny the authenticity of this Epistle to the Ephesians. One of them says: "What appears the most true, is that the Epistle to the Ephesians was not addressed to any determined Church; that, if it is from St. Paul, it is a simple circular letter destined for the Churches of Asia, composed of pagan converts. . . . The Epistle to the Ephesians, as to its style, deviates sensibly from certain Epistles; it has favorite expressions, shades that are only peculiar to it. . . . That Paul wrote or dictated this letter, is almost impossible to admit; but that it was compiled whilst he was still alive, under his eyes, in his name, this we could not declare as improbable."

All these doubts and hypotheses are without foundation. Tradition, until our century, is unanimous in attributing this Epistle to St. Paul. The ancient heretics do not speak any different, as to this subject, than the Catholic doctors. Marcion, about 150, changed its title and pretended that it had been written to the Laodicians, but he acknowledged that it was from St. Paul (Tertullian, *Cont. Marc.* v. 11, 17). The Naasenians, Basilides, Valentinus and his disciples Ptolemy and Theodotus, quote it as sacred Scripture (*Philosophoumena* v. 7, 8, etc.). Hence its origin was questioned by nobody.

As to the argument drawn from its style, Renan, who assures us that we find therein "words foreign to the ordinary language of St. Paul," acknowledges, nevertheless, that "some are found in the Epistles to Timothy, to Titus, and to the Hebrews." In reality, the Epistle to the Ephesians carries the mark of Paul; we recognize throughout his work, his ideas and doctrine. They claim that it is only a somewhat pale imitation of that which had been sent to the Colossians, a sort of vague and general circular which was not addressed to well-determined individuals. Nothing is more false. The amplitude of the developments, the force and authority of the Epistle to the Ephesians, prove that the latter is not a simple copy of the Epistle to the Colossians, nor a common circular. We read therein important traits added to what the Apostle

had previously written about the resurrection and the descent into Limbo (Eph. i. 20–22), of which he had not yet spoken; about predestination, which had been hardly touched upon in his letter to the Romans (Rom. viii. 29–30; cf. Eph. i. 5–12), and about which the Epistle to the Colossians keeps silence. The ideas about Christian marriage, already explained to the faithful of Corinth (I. Cor. vii.), attain here a greater elevation, for they reveal to us the sacred character thereof, in showing us therein an image of Jesus Christ with His Church (Eph. v. 20–23). The exhortations to wrestle against the infernal powers remind us of those which are already contained in the Epistle to the Romans, but they are more vehement; hence it is, indeed, the work of the Apostle of the Gentiles.

II. The Epistle to the Philippians.—The authenticity of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Philippians, attested by St. Polycarp in his letter which he wrote to the same Church, was never contested before the time of Christian Baur, and the pretexts upon which he supports himself are so futile that, even among his disciples, only a small number dared to follow him. He claims that the ideas developed therein are not those of St. Paul; but all the difficulties which he alleges are entirely without foundation. We find, indeed, in the letter to the Philippians and in those whose authenticity nobody contests, the same peculiarities and the same physiognomy; it is the same style, the same spirit, the same foundation, except some details which the diversity of circumstances explains. In this Epistle, the heart of St. Paul, his charity and zeal for souls as well as his faith, his courage, his love for Jesus Christ, and his indignation against the false doctors, appear absolutely under the same light as in the Epistles to the Corinthians, to the Galatians, and to the Romans. But Baur does not wish to accept the ideas as Paulinian, because they are in opposition to his theory on the origin of Christianity.

He attacks first the signature (Phil. i. 1), because mention is made therein, of bishops; but, according to Baur, the ecclesiastical hierarchy did not yet exist in the time of St. Paul. We shall see, in studying the pastoral Epistles, the falsity of this assertion.

A second objection, which is not less grave in the eyes of Rationalists, against the authenticity of the Epistle to the Philippians, is because it affirms categorically the divinity of Jesus Christ (Phil. ii. 6–11).

Rationalists, however, cannot pretend that St. Paul did not believe in this fundamental dogma, because in the Epistle to the Romans, which they do not contest, and which had been written before that which occupies us, the Apostle had said: *God hath not spared even his own Son* (Rom. viii. 32), expressions which necessarily imply the divinity of Jesus Christ. Moreover, everybody admits that the Epistle to the Hebrews, whoever its author may be, about which we do not need to inquire here, is anterior to the ruin of Jerusalem by Titus and consequently to the year 70. Now it makes express profession of the belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ who is "the figure of the substance of God" (Heb. i. 3). The Epistle to the Philippians, therefore, could profess the same belief almost in the same time. Renan has correctly remarked, contrary to Baur: "The reasons for which they wished to attack the two Epistles to the Thessalonians and that to the Philippians are without value."

III. The Epistle to the Colossians. — In 1838, Mayerhoff claimed that the Epistle to the Colossians is only an extract made by a forger from the Epistle to the Ephesians. Baur maintained later on that it had been composed only in the second century of our era and several of his disciples, in assigning to it diverse dates, have denied its authenticity.

The Epistle to the Colossians furnishes matter for two kinds of objections. They reproach it, in the first place, with its omissions, and, in the second place, for the doctrine which it teaches about the nature of Jesus Christ and the angels.

There is no question in the letter to the Colossians of justification by faith. Hence, some Rationalists conclude that it is not from St. Paul. This argument is not earnest. Why should the Apostle have spoken of justification by faith, if his correspondents did not need to be instructed about this point? Besides, the omission does not exist, for we find in the Epistle several allusions to the dogma which they pretend has been neglected therein. (Col. ii. 11, 16, 17.)

Baur also claims that the passage wherein the Epistle to the Colossians treats of the nature of the Son of God cannot be Paulinian. The Apostle would not have said that Jesus Christ is "the well-beloved Son" of God the Father, "the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature," etc. (Gal. i. 13–20.) This christology is not that of the authentic Epistles.—Why not? In reality, what the Apostle expresses here is only the development of what he had

written before to the Corinthians: *Christ is the power and wisdom of God* (I. Cor. i. 24).

Baur objects, finally, to the Epistle to the Colossians, on account of the enumeration of the Thrones, Dominations, Principalities, and Powers, wherein he discovers traces of Gnosticism.

To refute this objection, it is sufficient to recall to mind the passage of the Epistle to the Romans: *Nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, etc.* (Rom. viii. 38.) Of Eons and other reveries of Gnosticism, we do not discover the least trace in the letter of St. Paul. Farther on, it is true, we meet with an allusion to a certain religion or worship of angels: *Let no man seduce you, willing in humility, and religion of angels* (Col. ii. 18); but the sacred author has not in mind the Gnostic errors, but the fables of the Jews who, in this time, accepted about the heavenly spirits numerous superstitions of which the Talmud has preserved us the remembrance.

Besides, Gnosticism, an informal and confused mixture of Jewish, Platonic and even Christian ideas, goes back to the time of the Apostles, if even it is not anterior to them as to certain parts. St. Paul, therefore, might have had reference to Gnosticism in his letters, but we are not permitted, on this account, to conclude anything against their authenticity. But what appears to be the truth, is that the Gnostics tried to establish their errors on a false interpretation of several passages of St. Paul. "The tint of Gnosticism which we find in the Epistle to the Colossians," says Renan, "we find, although less characterized, in other writings of the New Testament, particularly in the Apocalypse and in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Apoc. xix. 13; Heb. i. 3). Instead of rejecting the authenticity of the passages of the New Testament, wherein we find traces of Gnosticism, we have to reason sometimes just the contrary, and seek in these passages the origin of the Gnostic ideas that prevailed in the second century" (*Saint Paul*, pp. 9, 10). We hardly need to remark that the Epistles do not contain anything Gnostic, properly speaking, but it is historically certain that the heretics abused some passages of St. Paul to draw from them their errors.

Renan acknowledges also in general, that, if there is a difference between the language of the Epistle to the Colossians and that of the Epistle to the Romans, to the Corinthians and Galatians, it is simply because the expressions of the first are stronger. "The most

energetic expressions of the Epistle to the Colossians only outbid somewhat those of anterior Epistles. . . . Nothing of what they allege against its authenticity is decisive. . . . I know that they reject the authenticity of the Epistle to the Colossians, but for quite insufficient reasons, according to my opinion. Those changes of theory, or rather of style, by men of all times full of ardent passion are, within certain limits, sometimes permitted." (*Saint Paul*, pp. 9, 10· *Vie de Jesus* 13th edit., p. 480.)

CHAPTER IV

THE EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS

The authenticity of the Epistles to the Thessalonians had never been contested before Christian Schmidt, in 1804. His attacks passed, however, nearly unnoticed, until the time when the School of Tubingen embraced his opinion. Christian Baur rejected the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. However, not all his disciples followed him; most of them even admire the authenticity of the first letter to the Thessalonians and to-day they limit themselves by contesting the second. But the Paulinian origin of both cannot be seriously questioned. The Muratorian Canon expressly names the two Epistles to the Thessalonians; St. Irenæus often quotes them in Gaul, Tertullian in Africa, and Clement of Alexandria in Egypt (St. Irenæus, *Contr. Haer.* v. 6; iv. 27; Clement of Alexandria, *Paedag.* i. 5; *Strom.* i. 1), so that at the end of the second century the belief of the entire Church was unanimous. Also Renan himself writes: "The reasons for which they wished to attack the two Epistles to the Thessalonians and that to the Philippians are without value. . . . The difficulties which certain moderns have raised against them are of those slight suspicions which it is the duty of criticism to express freely, but without stopping at them, when stronger reasons entail them. Now, these three Epistles have a character of authenticity which prevails over all consideration." (*Les Apotres*, p. 41; *Saint Paul* vi.)

The two Epistles to the Thessalonians are attacked like those which have been addressed to the Philippians and to the Colossians

for doctrinal reasons. "The only serious difficulty they have raised against the Epistles to the Thessalonians," says Renan, "is drawn from the theory of the Antichrist exposed in the second chapter of the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians; . . . but this objection can be solved." The ideas developed here by St. Paul are found, indeed, in his other letters. The two Epistles to the Thessalonians are the most ancient in date. They were written before the Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Galatians. Among other subjects, the Apostle treats therein of the resurrection of the dead. He returns to it in writing to the Corinthians (I. Cor. xv.). This thought was, therefore, familiar to him. Several traits which we find in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians are also found in the picture drawn by St. Luke, the Evangelist, in describing the last coming of the Saviour. The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians contains a particular detail; that of the apostasy which will take place at the end of time, but the same idea is also in St. Luke (xviii. 8; cf. Rom. xi. 20–22); hence, we cannot conclude anything against the authenticity of the Epistle.

However, we have to remark that what St. Paul writes about the coming of our Lord furnishes matter for a real difficulty, not against the authenticity of his letters, but about the idea which the Apostle had of the coming of the Saviour. This difficulty applies itself particularly to the Epistles to the Thessalonians; it presents itself elsewhere.

"The dream that had been the soul of the movement of the ideas provoked by Jesus still continued to be the fundamental dogma of Christianity; everybody believed in the near coming of the kingdom of God, in the unexpected manifestation of a great glory in the midst of which the Son of God would appear. The idea which they formed about this wonderful phenomenon was the same as in the time of Jesus. A great wrath, that is, a terrible catastrophe will strike all those whom Jesus will not have delivered. Jesus will show himself a king of glory, surrounded by angels (I. Cor. ii. 8; I. Thess. i. 10; ii. 12, 16; iii. 13; v. 23; II. Thess. i. 5, etc.; ii. 1, etc.). Then the judgment will take place. The saints, the persecuted will go and rank themselves round Jesus to enjoy with him an eternal rest. The infidels who have persecuted them, the Jews especially, will become a prey of fire. Their

punishment will be an eternal death; driven away from the face of Jesus, they will be dragged into an abyss of destruction. A destructive fire, indeed, will enkindle itself, will consume the world and all those who rejected the Gospel of Jesus. This final catastrophe will be a kind of a great and glorious manifestation of Jesus and of his saints, an act of supreme justice, a delayed reparation for the iniquities that have been until now the law of the century.» (E. Renan, *Saint Paul*, pp. 248–249.)

The most of these traits refer to the general judgment which will take place at the end of the world. But, say Rationalists, the Apostles and Jesus Himself, at least by intervals, believed that all these events were near. Let us listen to Renan:

«That all this was taken literally by the disciples and by the Master himself in certain moments, goes forth from the writings of the time with an absolute evidence. If the first Christian generation had a profound and constant belief, it is because the world is on the point of coming to an end and the great revelation of Christ is soon going to take place. That lively proclamation: *The time is at hand* (Apoc. i. 3), which opens and closes the Apocalypse (xxii. 10), that appeal continually repeated: *He that hath ears to hear, let him hear* (Matt. xi. 15), are the cries of hope and rally of the whole apostolic age. A Syriac expression, *Maran atha*, 'Our Lord arrives' (I. Cor. xvi. 22), became a sort of password which the faithful exchanged among one another to fortify themselves in their faith and hopes. The Apocalypse, written in the year 68 of our era, fixes the term at three years and a half. The Ascension of Isaias adopts a calculation approaching much the latter. Jesus was never so precise. When they asked him about the time of his coming, he always refused to answer; even once he declares that the date of this great day is known only to the Father, who has revealed it neither to the angels nor to the Son (Matt. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32). . . . These so formal declarations preoccupied the Christian family during nearly seventy years. It was admitted that some of the disciples would see the day of the final revelation without previously dying.» (E. Renan, *Vie de Jesus*, 1863, pp. 275–278.)

Whatever Renan may say, the words of our Lord cannot give rise to any serious difficulty. He had expressly declared that His

Father alone knew the hour of the last judgment. What He had announced as near at hand and before the present generation would pass away, was the ruin of Jerusalem, which took place as He had foretold.

But did the Apostles not misunderstand the Master? Jesus having spoken according to the manner of the prophets who did not distinguish the periods in their pictures of the future, and did not point out with precision the chronological succession of time, did His disciples not suppose that what should take place much later on was near at hand? St. Paul in particular, did he not believe that he would see with his own eyes, before his death, the triumphal coming of the Saviour, when he wrote to the Thessalonians: *For this we say unto you in the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them who have slept?* (I. Thess. iv. 14.) These words, compared with so many others which we read in the New Testament, have appeared so strong to many Protestants, that they believed St. Paul in error about the time of the second coming of Jesus Christ, and that he really believed the end of time to be near at hand.

We have to admit that the expressions of St. Paul may be understood in this sense, and the proof thereof is, among the Thessalonians, there were some who understood them thus, because the Apostle explains them in his Second Epistle and declares that we must attach another meaning to them: *We beseech you, brethren*, he says, *by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of our gathering together unto him, that you be not easily moved from your mind nor be frighted . . . as if the day of the Lord were at hand* (II. Thess. ii. 1–2). But we have to add that it was in taking these words isolately, without keeping account of the context, that the Thessalonians interpreted falsely the First Epistle, on account of the natural fear which the thought of the coming of God's judgment always produced. The human mind easily adopts interpretations of this kind. But what the Apostle did say, a few lines further on, clearly shows that he did not believe the second coming of the Saviour so near at hand: *But of the times and moments, brethren, you need not, that we should write to you, for yourselves know perfectly, that the day of the Lord shall so come, as a thief in the night* (I. Thess. v. 1–2).

Thus he reminds them of the words of Jesus Christ which we know through the Gospels (Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39).

St Paul does not retract, therefore, in the Second Epistle to the Thessalonians what he had written in the first. It was only in paying attention to what he had said of the incertitude of the moment when the Lord will come that one could misunderstand him. In several of his Epistles, he supposes that he will not live until the return of the Saviour; he writes to the Philippians: *I have a desire to be dissolved and to be with Christ* (i. 23). In the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, we read nothing to the contrary. Only by taking the pronoun «we» strictly in a literal sense, can we attach to it a false meaning. Most of the Fathers of the Church have rightly seen in this expression an enallage of person; not he himself is designated by this word, but the faithful who will live in the time of the coming of our Lord. «He does not say *we* of himself,» remarks St. Chrysostom, «for he should not live until the resurrection, but he understands, thereby, the faithful.» (*Hom.* vii. 2, in *I. Thess.*) If this explanation is not shielded from all objection, it is, nevertheless, very admissible, and in accord with the rest of the Epistle.

CHAPTER V

PASTORAL EPISTLES OF ST. PAUL AND THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON

The authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles of St. Paul, that is, of his two letters to Timothy and of that to Titus, has been universally accepted until our century. Schleiermacher is the first who, in 1807, rejected the First Epistle to Timothy, under pretext that it was partly composed of extracts from other pastoral Epistles, which he admitted to be authentic, and partly manufactured in imitation of them. Others went further, and rejected the three letters altogether. Renan made himself their echo. He devoted about twenty pages to attack the Pastoral Epistles. He says: «The authenticity of these three Epistles shows insurmountable difficulties. I regard them as apocryphal pieces. . . . The ordinary trait of the letters manufactured with a doctrinal view is that the forger sees away over the

head of the pretended person to whom it is addressed, and writes to the latter things which he knows very well, but which the forger insists that the public should know also. The three Epistles in question have this character in a high degree. Paul, whose authentic letters are so particular, so precise, Paul . . . would be here a general preacher, so preoccupied with his correspondent as to make sermons to him which have no relation to him, and to address to him a small code of ecclesiastical discipline in view of the future. . . . Finally, the organization of the Churches, the hierarchy, the priestly and episcopal power are, in these Epistles, much more developed than we are permitted to suppose in the last years of the life of St. Paul." (*Saint Paul*, pp. 23–26.)

The Apostle is not "a general preacher" in his letters to his disciples. He instructs them about their duties and the manner of administering the Church; thus he repeats to them things which they may know already, and, in giving to them personal counsels, he gives to them lessons which may serve to all the pastors of souls. But what is there astonishing in this? All the so-called letters of direction, in ascetic style, are of this kind.

But, according to Rationalists, the Epistles to Titus and to Timothy are not and cannot be authentic, because they speak of an ecclesiastical hierarchy which should not exist yet in the time of the Apostle of the Gentiles. The whole system of Baur consisting in explaining the origin of Christianity by a progressive and natural evolution, the organization must have been the work of time and not that of Jesus Christ and the Apostles. Since these Epistles establish the falsity of the rationalistic thesis, Baur and his followers conclude from them that they are only of the second century. However, history must not bend to systems *a priori;* systems must not contradict history. Eusebius of Cesarea counts the three Pastoral Epistles among the writings of the New Testament, which are accepted by all without contestation (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 3, 25). Before him, Pope St. Clement, contemporary of St. Paul, had alluded to them about twenty times in his first letter to the Corinthians. St. Ignatius, Martyr, and St. Polycarp also knew them. It is useless to cite a greater number of names; these are sufficient to show the antiquity of the Pastoral Epistles.

As to the objections alleged against their authenticity, they consist in pointing out historical errors. The principal of which,

as we have seen, is drawn from the fact that "the organization of the Churches, the hierarchy, the presbyterial and episcopal power are much more developed than we are permitted to suppose in the last years of the life of St. Paul."

To this objection, it is easy to answer: it is true that the Pastoral Epistles suppose that there were, in the Christian communities, bishops, priests and deacons; it is true that one of the chief subjects of the letters to Timothy and Titus, is the recommendation to them to entrust to worthy pastors the conduct of souls and to point out to them their duties, but this is quite natural. The Apostles could not be without co-laborers. They also needed successors. Timothy and Titus were the auxiliaries of the first disciples of the Saviour; they were in need of help in their turn, and since the choice of ministers of the Church is of the highest importance, St. Paul gave to them counsels upon this grave matter. What is more natural? Even if no other testimony would make known to us the existence of this organization, it is so indispensable that it would result from the very necessity in which Christianity was of having chiefs to perpetuate itself and live.

But, besides this reason drawn from the nature of things, we have positive facts which confirm the truth of all that is supposed by the Pastoral Letters. In the Epistle to Titus, it is especially recommended to him to establish priests, that is, according to the context, bishops in the city of Crete (Tit. i. 5–7). It is, so to say, the counterpart of what we read in the Acts, namely, that St. Paul established priests (bishops) in each Church (Acts xiv. 22). The author of the First Epistle to Timothy writes to him: *Neglect not the grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with imposition of the hands of the priesthood* (I. Tim. iv. 14). We cannot pretend that the imposition of the hands was unknown in the apostolic age, because, in the Acts of the Apostles (xiii. 1–3), we also see an assembly of prophets and doctors imposing the hands on Paul and Barnabas.

The Pastoral Epistles also mention the deacons. The institution of deacons is expressly mentioned in the Acts; consequently, it cannot offer, and does not offer, in fact, any difficulty. There existed, therefore, in the time of the Apostles, deacons, priests and bishops, and, in spite of all the negations of Rationalists, it is certain that the

ecclesiastical hierarchy is of Apostolic origin. This is a fact historically demonstrated. It is certain and unquestionable that it was universally in force in the Church in the second century, in Asia, in Italy, in Greece, in Gaul and in Africa. In all these countries, at the head of churches, are priests, they themselves placed under the government of a bishop; all the ancient monuments are a unanimous attestation to this. We find, therefore, the sacred hierarchy established everywhere; we see its rise nowhere. If we inquire where and in what time this organization commenced, we find no trace of its origin nor of its progress, which proves that it is as ancient as the Church itself, and that it is the work of the Apostles.

The most uncontested Epistles of St. Paul attest to us this origin through allusions which they contain concerning the ecclesiastical hierarchy. The doctor of the Gentiles does not forget the gift of the government in the enumeration of the gifts of the Holy Ghost (I. Cor. xii. 7–10). The Epistle to the Ephesians speaks expressly of "pastors" in the same manner as of Apostles and doctors, etc. (Eph. iv. 11.) The consecration of bread and wine, mentioned in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (xi. 23–26; cf. x. 16–17), implies the existence of a consecrator, that is, of a priesthood. The Epistle to the Hebrews, which is certainly anterior to the Pastoral Epistles, occupies itself at length with the Christian priesthood (Heb. iv. 14–15; v. 1–11).

The Apocalypse, which dates from the last years of the first century (in 95) and which would even go back, according to infidels, to the year 68, confirms the testimony of St. Paul; it shows us seven bishops presiding over seven Churches of Asia Minor of which it speaks. Nobody dares to deny that St. James, the brother of St. Jude, has been "bishop" of Jerusalem. Therefore, the ecclesiastical hierarchy existed at that time.

The letter of St. Clement to the Corinthians, composed undoubtedly about the end of the first century, between the year 91 and the year 100, also clearly supposes the existence of the hierarchy, and it speaks thereof as of an institution known by all the Christians, and, consequently, ancient. This Pontiff, twenty-five years, at the most, after the death of St. Paul, reproaches the Corinthians for having driven away their bishop to replace him by another, and he says in express terms that the bishops have been established by the Apostles. The one who expresses

himself thus is a Pope. We have, therefore, here all the degrees of the hierarchical ladder, in the first century of the Church.

Rationalistic criticism also claims that the widows, of whom there is question in the First Epistle to Timothy (v. 9–16), became ecclesiastical auxiliaries only in the second century.

This assertion is false. The First Epistle to the Corinthians speaks of certain women who exercised in the Church a ministry of charity (I. Cor. ix. 5). St. Paul names Phebe, a deaconess of the Church of Cenchrea. The institution, already started in 56 or 57, developed itself naturally, and if, about 64 or 66, in his First Epistle to Timothy, the Apostle shows us Christian widows forming a sort of charitable association (I. Tim. v. 9–16), this progress is conformable to the nature of things. The existence, in the first century of the Church, of the organization which the Pastoral Epistles suppose is, therefore, historically established.

Various critics allege also against the authenticity of these writings doctrinal objections. The letters to Timothy and to Titus contain various passages which they claim to be in discord with the doctrine and manner of doing of St. Paul. This allegation is false. The Apostle St. Paul speaks of Jesus Christ (Tit. ii. 11–14) as in the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians, and Romans, and there exists, as to this capital subject, no difference among the letters of the great Apostle.

They object in particular against what the Epistle to Titus contains as to the subject of heresies. This language, they say, is suspicious. But why? Did heresies not already begin to raise their heads? The proof that they are almost as ancient as the Church itself, is that the First Epistle to the Corinthians mentions them already (I. Cor. xi. 19).

Finally, rationalists attack, the Pastoral Letters in affirming that they contain false things. The Apostle did not do, he even could not do, what they suppose. What is, then, impossible or apocryphal in their contents? Let us inquire. The Second Letter to Timothy speaks of divers voyages of St. Paul; they are quite in accord with what we know of him. Nothing of what we read in the Pastoral Epistles is in contradiction with his character. "Not only," says Sabatier, "in regard to the Second Epistle to Timothy, is there nothing in these texts that does not become the Apostle; but it is also absolutely inadmissible that he tam-

pered with the apocryphal literature of the second century; that a Christian of this age, writing about 130 or 170, could re-construct such a neatly-determined situation, and with details and circumstances at once so disinterested and striking, and recover and render, what is still more incredible, the dispositions of the soul, the emotions and sentiments among which St. Paul quitted life.» (*Encyclopedie des Sciences religieuses*, vol. X, p. 251.)

They raise against the Pastoral Epistles a last objection drawn from the time of their composition. The First to Timothy and that to Titus have been written between the first and second captivities of St. Paul; the Second to Timothy was written during the imprisonment which preceded the martyrdom of the Apostle; none of them can be anterior to the first imprisonment. Criticism concludes from this that they are all apocryphal, because, according to infidels, St. Paul had been a prisoner only once, when he was led away from Palestine to Rome, as the Acts relate.

This objection has something surprising. One must have a strange audacity to deny a fact so well established by history as the double captivity of St. Paul. Pope St. Clement, who had been his disciple, expressly affirms that the Apostle had carried the Gospel into the extremities of the West (*I. Epist. ad Cor.*), which he could do only after having been delivered from prison a first time. The fragment of Muratori also relates that St. Paul went to preach in Spain. Eusebius, in his *Church History*, says: «After having pleaded his cause, (Paul) departed anew for the ministry of preaching, as they say, and after a second visit to the same city (of Rome), he ended there his life by martyrdom.» Therefore, the Apostle could write to Timothy when he was imprisoned at Rome the second time. All that we read in the Pastoral Epistles is so characteristic of St. Paul, that even those who deny their authenticity say: «The Paulinian tradition is confirmed, therein, most forcibly; . . . this is a point acknowledged by everybody.»

Epistle of St. Paul to Philemon.—The authenticity of the short letter to Philemon is not seriously contested. On account of its brevity and its contents, it has been little quoted by ancient ecclesiastical writers, but it is expressly named among the Epistles of St. Paul in the Muratorian Canon; we read it in all the ancient versions, and few critics, even to-day, dare to question its authenticity. Baur is almost the only one who contradicts tradition, and he does so

because he wishes to reject the authenticity of the Epistle to the Colossians and because the letter to Philemon furnishes an argument against his thesis, but he could not give a reason in support of his opinion.

CHAPTER VI

EPISTLE OF ST. PAUL TO THE HEBREWS

I. Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews.—The authenticity of the thirteen Epistles of St. Paul with which we occupied ourselves thus far has been universally admitted during the first eighteen centuries of the Church. It is not the same with the fourteenth and last, that which is addressed to the Hebrews; its Paulinian origin has been a subject of discussion among the ancient ecclesiastical writers, and naturally rationalistic criticism does not hesitate to maintain that "the Epistle to the Hebrews is not from St. Paul." We shall explain the incertitudes about the author of the letter, and show at the same time that our Vulgate was right in ranking it among the Epistles of this Apostle.

The first ecclesiastical author who quoted the Epistle to the Hebrews is one of the most ancient of all—St. Clement, of Rome, the companion of St. Paul (Phil. iv. 3). This illustrious Pontiff knew the writing very well, and his letter to the Corinthians is filled with reminiscences of this Epistle; he makes use thereof, as of an inspired writing, and we have thus, in favor of its canonicity, a testimony which goes back to the year 70 of our era, according to some, to the year 97 or 100 for the latest, according to others. However, the successor of St. Peter in the chair of Rome, in teaching us that the Epistle to the Hebrews was already looked upon in his time as a part of the Scriptures, does not tell us who its author is; he quotes it as he does most of the other passages which he borrows from the Sacred Books, without nominally attributing it to anybody, because, for the Fathers, the real author of the Bible is the Holy Ghost.

St. Clement wrote in Greek and to Greeks, and his letter, which became very famous in the East, and was read there in the Churches

with those of the Apostles, remained almost unknown in the West. His testimony in favor of the canonicity of the Epistle to the Hebrews was null and void for most of the Latins, who did not know of its existence. The Epistle itself was little known for a long time in the Western Church. It is important to inquire about the causes of this fact, because they throw a good deal of light on the question that occupies us.

The letters of the Apostles did not enjoy at first the same publicity as the Gospels and the Acts, and this difference can be easily understood. The Gospels addressed themselves to all the faithful; they contained the history of the Master; they were of a universal interest; there was not one single Christian that did not desire to know in detail the life of his Saviour, and who did not devour, so to speak, with love the sacred pages which revived under his eyes the adorable scenes of Galilee and of Jerusalem,—the birth, the public life, the passion, the death and the resurrection of Jesus. It was not the same with the Epistles. However precious they might be, they were not addressed to everybody, but to a particular Church; they treated special questions interesting that part of the Church to which they were sent more than the whole Christian community in general. Consequently, the preachers of the good news did not propagate them in all the places with the same rapidity as the biographies of our Lord; their publicity was limited; it restrained itself primitively to the Church which received them; only successively were they spread more and more, until finally they became known to the universal Church.

We can easily understand that the spreading of the Epistles in the Catholic universe wrought itself only very slowly, especially in a time when, printing not yet being invented, they had to transcribe each writing by hand in order to propagate the copies; a long and tedious work, which they did not undertake so willingly for the apostolic Letters as for the Gospels, because they preferred the possession of the latter to the former.

Diverse circumstances contributed, nevertheless, to spread the copies of the other Epistles of St. Paul in greater numbers than the Epistle to the Hebrews. The first was that the foregoing Epistles were addressed to particular Churches, whilst the latter was sent nominally to none. The letters of the great Apostle were read pub-

licly in the assemblies of the faithful to which they were written, and this was a considerable means of making them public. The Epistle to the Hebrews could not be known through this means, because it was not destined for any special Church, and the Judeo-Christians, to whom it was addressed, were scattered among the faithful of pagan origin. Moreover, the Churches to which the great Apostle had written nominatively, felt flattered at the honor they had thus received; they glorified thereof on every occasion; they communicated these letters as a title of glory to the neighboring Churches; they sought to multiply the copies and to make them known far and wide. For the Epistle to the Hebrews it could not be the same. No particular Church was interested in propagating it; and the most the Hebrews whom it concerned could desire was to have a copy thereof for their personal use. But soon their number had become very limited, for the converted Israelites soon formed only a very small minority among the mass of the Christians, and became confounded completely with those who were of pagan origin. It was especially in countries where the Jews were less numerous, that is, in the West, and principally in Africa, that the Epistle to the Hebrews was known the least. We shall see, indeed, that it was in countries where the Latin language was in use, and especially in the province of Carthage, where the Jews were very scarce, that they contested the authenticity of this writing, whilst they defended it in the East, where the Christians of Israelitic origin were more numerous.

Another circumstance which contributed not less to withdraw at first the attention from the Epistle to the Hebrews, was the difficulty which all those who were not Jews by birth, had in understanding it. It is so filled with allusions to the Old Testament, and still more, to the Jewish usages and customs, that it needs yet to-day a great deal of study and great diligence to understand it and to seize its bearing. The first Christians, apart of a small number, were certainly incapable of reading it fluently, because, although they knew in general the Gospels, they were little familiar with the Old Testament, whose copies were very scarce; especially were they strangers to a great number of Jewish practices whose knowledge the Epistle to the Hebrews supposes. For all these motives, this letter had to be less read and its copies less multiplied and spread than those of the other Epistles. Hence it comes that

the Epistle to the Hebrews remained for some time almost unknown to a great part of the Church.

If particular reasons obliged the Doctors of the West, and especially those of Africa, to occupy themselves with this inspired writing, those which pointed it out to their attention were not proper at first to render them sympathetic for it. It fact, they were heretics, the Novatians, who, the first, in the third century, made appeal to the letter of St. Paul, but in order to abuse it.

Novatian, who is regarded as the first of the antipopes, in order to supplant the holy Pontiff Cornelius, legitimate successor of St. Peter, affected an excessive zeal, which threw him into heresy; he taught that those who had the criminal weakness to sacrifice to idols during the persecutions, those whom they called *lapsi*, could not be absolved from their sin. This was renewing the error of the Montanists. Three bishops pronounced themselves, however, in favor of his doctrine and tried to raise him to the See of Rome. He also counted among his followers an African, called Novatus, who, after having upheld at Carthage that the apostates should be dispensed from penance, on the recommendation of a confessor of the faith, did not hesitate to maintain quite the contrary in the capital of the Empire, just as Novatian did.

St. Cyprian, who had combated the ancient errors of Novatus, combated equally the new, and a Council of Carthage condemned them at the same time as those of the Roman antipope. But in declaring the teachings of the Novatians as heretical, they had to refute the arguments upon which they tried to support themselves. Now, among two reasons alleged by the innovators, there was one drawn from the Epistle to the Hebrews. They pretended to found their doctrine upon the following text of this Letter which they wrongly interpreted: *It is impossible for those who were once illuminated, have tasted also the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have moreover tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, and are fallen away; to be renewed again to penance* (Heb. vi. 4–6).

The meaning of this passage, according to the Greek and according to the Latin Fathers of the fourth century, is that those who have been once baptized, cannot be this a second time and obtain, by a new baptism, the remission of sins committed since the first. The words of *illumination*, *renewing* or *renovation*, of

which the author of the Epistle makes use, designate baptism, they said, not penance. "The one who does penance," St. Athanasius wrote, explaining this verse against the Novatians, "ceases, in truth, to sin, but he keeps the scars of his wounds; on the contrary, the one who is baptized, lays off the old man and he is renewed, being begotten from above through the grace of the Holy Ghost" (*Epist.* iv. *ad Serapion*, 13). In Judaism, in St. Paul's time, they attached to the ablution by water, or non-Christian baptism, a purifying virtue, as can be seen in the Gospels. As this baptism was not a sacrament, they could repeat it several times and it always preserved the same value. Those Israelites who had become Christians might have been inclined to believe that it was the same with the baptism of the new law as with that of the old law, and that they had the right to renew it as often as they had sinned; it is against a similar error that the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, according to the Fathers we have quoted, warns those to whom he addresses himself.

Modern theologians generally explain in another manner the text which the Novatians abused; they believe that there is question of the sacrament of penance, but say that we must not understand the word *impossible*, employed by St. Paul, strictly in the literal sense; this word only signifies *very difficult;* the impossibility is not absolute, but moral.

Whichever explanation one may prefer, that of the ancients or that of moderns, interests us little at this moment. Even the diversity of the interpretations proves that the passage is obscure, and we can easily understand that it could appear suspicious to the defenders of the faith who did not know or at least had not fixed its origin.

We have said that the Epistle to the Hebrews had been at first little known in the West, and particularly in the province of Africa, because the Jews were not numerous in these countries. A testimony borrowed from this writing by heretics, to uphold a false doctrine, could, therefore, awaken only suspicions on the authority of the writing itself. This really took place. The authenticity of the Epistle was not yet established in the West. Without examining any closer whether the passage the Novatians abused was not susceptible of an orthodox interpretation, the Catholics, and especially the Africans, rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews from which the text was

drawn, and refused to rank it among the canonical books of the New Testament. Indeed, this Letter seems to have been placed since that time at the end of the ancient Latin version of Scripture adopted by the Churches of Africa, but it did not carry the name of St. Paul and no decision of the universal Church had until then defined its canonicity. Tertullian attributed its composition to St. Barnabas, and when he blamed Marcion of having rejected the three Pastoral Epistles of the great Apostle, he did not reproach him of not admitting the Epistle to the Hebrews which the Paphlagonian heresiarch also refused to accept. Its authenticity was, therefore, regarded at least as doubtful; hence the forsaking of this sacred monument which the Fathers of Africa made in their wrestling against the Novatians. Undoubtedly, on this occasion, they had to examine it more closely; but this examination, made by minds necessarily somewhat prejudiced against it, on account of the abuse which the heretics had made thereof, was not sufficient to put an end to their hesitations and to make them acknowledge in this work a writing of St. Paul.

Besides, we must not forget, that the Epistle to the Hebrews does not carry the name of the Apostle, like his other Letters; we must, moreover, remark that the unusual form in which it is drawn up and the peculiar character of its style could only increase the incertitudes and furnish plausible and specious pretexts to question the authenticity of a document patronized by the Novatians. Further on we have to return to these singular traits of the Epistle to the Hebrews which distinguish it from the other Epistles; here we need only to mention the difficulties which it raised, in the third century, in the Church of the West; these difficulties had hardly any other source than the embarrassment of polemics and the ignorance of real tradition.

True tradition about the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews preserved itself in the Church of the East, whilst debates took place about it in the West as we have seen. The Jews were much more numerous, as we stated before, in those parts of the Roman Empire where the Greek language was spoken; there, quite naturally, where it had been received in the first place, they must have been best informed about the production of a writing addressed to Judeo-Christians. But among the places inhabited by the children of Jacob, outside of Judea, there was one famous among them, on

account of the multitude that had assembled there and still more on account of the brilliancy of the teaching they gave there; it was Alexandria, the capital of Egypt.

This city was at that time the most important literary center; all the Jewish and Christian lights, as well as pagans, met here during the first centuries of our era; here they studied with an extraordinary zeal both the sacred and profane monuments; eminent professors taught in these schools; its Museum was a wonder; its library the richest in the world. The Christians were not behind in spreading brightness in this city of letters, neither in the merit of the masters that were teaching, nor in the number and zeal of disciples that came to learn by their lessons. The names of masters like Pantænus, Clement, Origen, are immortal, and the Christian school of Alexandria, the Didascalic, is the first in glory as in date in the ecclesiastical annals, although it has not always been without stain.

Therefore, here were condensed, like in a burning hearth, the most lively lights of the primitive times of Christianity, and here they had to be most enlightened about the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, which especially interested so many Alexandrian Jews converted to the new religion. Also here we hear the name of its author mentioned for the first time, namely, the Apostle St. Paul. One of the teachers of the Christian school of Alexandria tells us, indeed, in a precious passage preserved to us by Eusebius: "The Epistle to the Hebrews is of Paul, and has been written for the Hebrews, in the Hebrew language, but Luke has carefully translated and published it for the Greeks." (Clement of Alexandria, in Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 14.)

The testimony rendered in regard to this subject draws from the writer from whom it emanates and from the place where it has been written an exceptional value. We have already seen that nowhere could they be better informed than at Alexandria about the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. As to the authority of Clement, it has here so much more weight as it supports itself upon St. Pantænus, the teacher who had preceded him in the direction of the school of Alexandria. Now, St. Pantænus was of Jewish origin; consequently, he came from a family which was necessarily more exactly informed than any other about the fact in question. Moreover, less than one century had elapsed between the

death of St. Paul, in 67, and the birth of St. Pantænus about the year 150.

Those who refuse to acknowledge in the great Apostle the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews cannot contest the importance of the testimony reported. They try to attenuate its force, in claiming that it is isolated, and reject all the posterior writers who were of the same opinion, under pretext that they only repeated the words of the Egyptian Doctor, by allying themselves blindly to his affirmation.

However, even if we had, in favor of the Paulinian origin of the Epistle to the Hebrews, only the authority of Clement of Alexandria, or of St. Panteanus, his teacher, it would not follow at all that these two learned men had been mistaken. A first testimony is needed, and if this testimony is unique, either because it is the only one that could speak, or because it is the only one that survived, we could reject its deposition only in so far as we should have serious motives to suspect it as a false testimony of error or of ignorance. Now, no more ancient or contemporary author contradicts the Doctors of Alexandria and one cannot allege against the fact which they advance any decisive reason, as we shall see further on.

But it is inexact, moreover, that the general belief which attributes to the Apostle of the Gentiles the composition of the Epistle to the Hebrews rests solely on the testimony of Clement of Alexandria. Origen, when he declares this writing Paulinian, does not appeal to the authority of Clement, of whom he had been a disciple, but to that of the "ancients" (In Eusebius, *H.E.* vi. 25), a word which can designate only apostolic tradition. Eusebius himself, who has preserved to us the passages of Clement and Origen we have reported, expressly teaches that the school of Alexandria was not alone in attributing to St. Paul the Epistle to the Hebrews: "It was," he says, "the general belief of the Orientals; only a small number," he adds, "formed an exception, saying that they rejected it in the Roman Church" (Eusebius, *H.E.* iii. 3) as not being from St. Paul. Who were those few contradictors? We do not know. A writer of little importance of the sixth century, Stephen Gobar, said, according to what Photius tells us in his *Library*, that neither St. Irenæus, nor St. Hippolytus, his disciple, regarded the Epistle to the Hebrews as Paulinian; but his affirmation, without proofs, can be looked upon as of little weight.

Be it as it may, however, as to the latter point, it is an established fact that at the end of the third century, in the East, that is, in the countries were they were best informed on the subject, general tradition acknowledged in St. Paul the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the fourth century, there is almost a unanimous voice as to this point, not only in the East, but also in the West, where they were better informed by the Greek Doctors about this question. St. Hilary, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, speak like St. Alexander and Theophilus of Alexandria, St. Athanasius, St. Epiphanus, St. Ephrem, St. Gregory of Nazianz, St. John Chrysostom, etc.

The authority of so many and so great doctors puts an end to the question in dispute; they contested no longer that St. Paul was the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. About one thousand years had elapsed without anybody dreaming of attacking a truth which appeared to be settled forever; but with Protestantism, under pretext to reform everything, the wrestling reopened itself and the debates recommenced.

A Catholic, Cardinal Cajetan, famous on account of the keenness of his opinions, was the first to question the authority of this sacred monument. His voice remained without echo in the Roman Church; it was not the same among the new heretics, of whom several adopted his opinion. Luther, when he published his German translation of the Bible, separated the Epistle to the Hebrews from the other Epistles of St. Paul, and placed it at the end, as a suspicious composition. He attributed it to Apollo, of whom the New Testament speaks in various places.

This Apollo was a Jew of Alexandria, and a convert to Christianity. He had at first been very imperfectly instructed about the new doctrine by disciples of St. John the Baptist, but at Ephesus, whither he went in the year 54, Aquila and Priscilla finished making the truth known to him. Then he became a preacher of the Gospel, first in Achaia, then at Corinth (Acts xviii. 27; xix. 1), where he watered what St. Paul had already planted (I. Cor. iii. 6). When the latter wrote his First Epistle to the Corinthians, Apollo was with him or near him, probably at Ephesus, in the year 57 (I. Cor. xvi. 12). His name still appears in the Epistle to Titus (iii. 13). It is believed that he became bishop of Cesarea. This is all that we know of his life.

Other critics have imagined different authors. Some attribute the Epistle to Silas. He was a companion of St. Paul, whom the Apostle, in his Epistles, calls Silvanus. His name, derived from the Latin word *silva*, "wood, forest," seems to indicate a Hellenist Jew. He appears to have been a Roman citizen (Acts xvi. 37). He was one of the principal members of the Church of Jerusalem (xv. 22) where he taught with authority (xv. 32). He was chosen to accompany St. Paul and St. Barnabas in their voyage to Antioch after the Council of Jerusalem. The Apostle of the nations associated him also in his second missionary voyage (xv. 40—xvii. 15), and he speaks repeatedly of him in his Epistles (II. Cor. i. 19; I. Thess. i. 1; II. Thess. i. 1). Certain commentators believe that he was the bearer of the First Epistle of St. Peter into Asia Minor (I. Pet. v. 12). History teaches us nothing more about this personage. He certainly played a great rôle in the first years of Christianity, but what we know of him does not permit us in any manner to attribute to him the Epistle to the Hebrews.

Grotius believed that it was composed by the author of the third Gospel and of the Acts of the Apostles, that is, by St. Luke. This opinion is not so arbitrary as the foregoing; nevertheless it is unfounded. We have seen that Clement of Alexandria considered St. Luke the translator of the Epistle, and modern criticism has established between the style of this writing and that of the Gospel of St. Luke, as well as the Acts, striking analogies. We shall very soon point them out and we shall see that they do not show that the third Evangelist is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, but that, for the most, he served only as secretary or as translator to St. Paul. Resemblances of style cannot prevail against the so precise tradition of the Church of Alexandria, especially when this tradition gives a very neat explanation thereof, although she could not be instructed as to this coöperation of St. Luke, as well as modern philologists are, through the resources of criticism.

They have set up still more fantastical hypotheses. The writers whose opinion we have exposed substitute for St. Paul apostolic personages, known by the New Testament. Exegetists of our time have invented all kinds of authors of whom history shows no trace. Neander supposes that a contemporary of the great Apostle, accepting the foundation of his teaching, but differing from him by his first education and by his manner of explaining the Christian

truths, is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Ewald accumulates hypotheses upon hypotheses. He imagines a Church of an important city of Italy; this city sends a deputation into Palestine; there it finds a converted Jewish doctor to whom it communicates its mission; this doctor answers, from Jerusalem, to the Italian community; imagination takes here the place of criticism; we have to do with a romancist, not with a historian.

It is useless to exhibit other systems as to this question: they all are wanting in foundation; they wished to set aside tradition, as if it were possible to make history otherwise than with historical testimonies! The tradition which the Church of Alexandria has, therefore, transmitted to us, is not shaken at all. St. Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. To complete this demonstration, it remains for us to answer the objections of rationalistic criticism.

II. Solution of the Objections against the Paulinian Origin of the Epistle to the Hebrews.—The objections which criticism raises against the attribution to St. Paul of the Epistle to the Hebrews are drawn from peculiarities which distinguish it. Renan sums them up thus: "The style of the Epistle to the Hebrews is . . . different from that of Paul; it is more oratorical, more periodic; the diction presents peculiar words. The foundation of the thoughts approaches the opinions of Paul, especially of the prisoner Paul; but the exposition and exegesis are different. No nominative signature, contrary to the constant habit of the Apostle,—traits which we always can expect to find in an Epistle of Paul, are wanting in this Letter. The exegesis is especially allegorical and resembles much more that of Philo than that of Paul. The author partakes of Alexandrian culture. He makes use only of the version of the Septuagint; his reasonings on the text of this version prove a complete ignorance of the Hebrew; his manner of quoting and analyzing the biblical texts is not conformable to the method of Paul. The author, on the other hand, is a Jew; he believes in pointing out the Christ by comparing him to the Hebrew high-priest; Christianity is for him only an accomplished Judaism; he is far from regarding the Law as abolished. . . . The Epistle to the Hebrews is, therefore, not from Paul." (*Saint Paul*, pp. 59–60.)

In spite of all these objections of rationalistic exegetists, it is not less true that St. Paul is the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Undoubtedly, the style differs from that of his other Letters, but this difference explains itself, as we shall see, and in all the other points we recognize the great Apostle,—his doctrine and teaching, with the exception of slight modifications in the exposition which are the natural consequences of the change of correspondents; he writes to converted co-religionists as the Hebrews were, raised in the Law of Moses and having become Christians, and not to Gentiles, to Corinthians, Philippians, raised in paganism. Except these shades, the unity of views and manner is as clear as daylight.

The great love of the Apostle for his brethren, descendants of Abraham like himself, manifests itself in the Letter to the Hebrews just as in his other Letters (Rom. ix. 3); it is animated by the most ardent charity. We can see also therein the burning flame of his zeal, which aspires only to unite all the souls with Jesus Christ.

The march which he follows is his ordinary march; according to the plan which he has adopted in all his writings, he makes first a dogmatic exposition, which is the principal part, and he ends (Heb. xiii.) by moral exhortations. If there exist some differences in his manner of reasoning and expressing himself, they are derived from the end he has in view and from the character of those to whom he writes.

He naturally supports himself here, more than anywhere else, upon the Old Testament, because his readers know it better than the Christians converted from paganism and because his quotations must be especially agreeable to them; but it is good to remark that his favorite texts, those which he quoted already in his other Letters, return more easily to his memory. This coincidence of the same quotations is so much more striking as several among them are not found anywhere else in the New Testament.

Since the Hebrews of this time loved much the allegorical sense, St. Paul interprets allegorically several passages of the Sacred Books, but this kind of interpretation is not exclusively peculiar to this letter; we find it also in his other Epistles; and, contrary to what Renan affirms, his exegesis in this Letter is the same as in his other writings, and Philo has no more inspired the exegesis of the Letter to the

Hebrews than that of the other Letters. We find even in the latter clearer allegorical traits than in the former. It was not to the Hebrews, but to the Corinthians, he said that *all these things happened to them in figure* (I. Cor. x. 11). It was not to the Hebrews, but to the Galatians that he wrote in regard to the two sons of Abraham, Isaac and Ismael: *Which things are said by an allegory. For these are the two Testaments*, etc. (Gal. iv. 24.)

Finally, if the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews "makes use of the version of the Septuagint," which was much spread among the Jews, especially in Egypt, where it had arisen, the author of the Epistle to the Galatians makes use of it equally.

The "exegesis" is therefore not "different" in this Letter from that of the other Letters of St. Paul. The doctrine is also the same. We find therein the same thoughts: the glory of Jesus Christ, reward of His humiliations (Phil. ii. 8–11; Heb. ii. 9); the victory carried over death or over the devil by the Redeemer, conquerer of His enemy through death itself (I. Cor. xv. 54; Heb. ii. 14); the testament of the new covenant confirmed by the death of the testator, our Saviour (Gal. iii. 15–17; Heb. ix. 15–47); His passion and blood cleansing us from our sins (Rom. v. 9; Heb. ix. 14, 28). The moral recommendations are also alike; to live in peace with everybody (Rom. xii. 18; II. Cor. viii. 21; Heb. xii. 14); to practice hospitality (Rom. xii. 13; Heb. xiii. 2); patience (II. Cor. xi. 4, etc.; Heb. vi. 12; x. 36; xii. 1), etc. In one word, throughout it is both the same doctrine and the same spirit of St. Paul. The final vow, by which he wishes the grace of God (Rom. xvi. 24) to his correspondents, in ending each of his Letters, and which is exclusively peculiar to him, we read in the Letter to the Hebrews, as in the thirteen other Letters of the great Apostle, and we might say that this is really his signature, because this formula is only employed by him.

The grace which St. Paul wishes to the faithful, is, as he explains himself, *the communication of the Holy Ghost* (II. Cor. xiii. 13). His writings are the part of our Sacred Books which best make known to us its nature; he is the theologian of grace. In the Epistle to the Hebrews he not only desires it, in concluding, for those to whom he addresses himself, but in the course of his exposition he speaks thereof as in his other Letters: Jesus Christ is the source of all grace (Heb. iv. 16; Rom. i. 5; vii. 25; II. Cor. viii. 9, etc.); we obtain it from Him through prayer (Heb. iv. 16; I. Cor. vii. 9); it has

been merited for us through the passion of our Lord (Heb. ii. 9; x. 10; Rom. v. 9); it is a gift of the Holy Ghost (Heb. x. 29; Rom. v. 5; Gal. iv. 6), who puts us in the state to serve God in a manner that is agreeable to Him (Heb. xii. 28; Rom. xiv. 17–18; viii. 26; I. Cor. xii. 3, etc.); it is, therefore, the best good we can desire (Heb. xiii. 9; I. Tim. iv. 14, etc.), and we ought to be very careful not to lose it (Heb. xii. 15; II. Cor. vi. 1; I. Tim. iv. 14).

We could show the same in regard to faith, hope and charity from the contents of the Epistle to the Hebrews and from the other writings of St. Paul, and multiply analogous approachings; but what we said is more than sufficient, because Rationalists who deny the authenticity of this Letter are forced to recognize therein the doctrine of the great Apostle. They claim to explain this similitude of ideas, it is true, by maintaining that we have to do here with a disciple of St. Paul; but their explanation is inadmissible, for the resemblance exists not only about one particular point; it is general, it extends itself to all, to the quotations of texts, to the manner of thinking and conceiving, as we have seen, and also to the manner of imagining and representing things, as we are going to show.

One of the most characteristic traits of St. Paul are the figures, the images of which he makes use to express his thoughts. He has created a new language, he has coined new words, to render the ideas which Christianity introduced into the world, and one of the most original parts of his writings is his metaphorical vocabulary. His inspired genius conceived things in quite a new way, and his powerful imagination has invented comparisons which now have become familiar to us, but which we find in no other part of Holy Scripture.

He is the first that gave to the books of the old Law the name of "Old" Testament, and this denomination we read only in his Epistles (II. Cor. iii. 14; cf. Heb. ix. 15). The parallel and opposition between the Old and the New Testament, which also form the foundation of the Epistle to the Hebrews, are equally peculiar to him (Gal. iv. 24; Heb. vii. etc.). He loves to consider Jesus Christ as an heir to whom His Father gives the world for inheritance (Gal. iv. 7; Heb. i. 2); for us, we are His coheirs (Rom. viii. 17; Gal. iii. 26; Tit. iii. 7; Heb. vi. 17; i. 14; ix. 15;) we owe all to Him; He has commenced and completed our salvation (Heb. ii. 10; xii. 1; I. Tim. iv. 10), and we form, in a way, only one with Him. The latter image is the one most familiar to St. Paul, one of those that belong

exclusively to him. He presents it sometimes under one form, sometimes under another; but, be it in a similar or different manner, he returns to it in all his Epistles, and that to the Hebrews forms no exception. *Christ is as the son of his own house; which house are we*, he says. . . . *For we are made partakers of Christ; yet so, if we hold the beginning of his substance firm unto the end* (Heb. iii. 6, 14; cf. vi. 1). As to our sins and evil habits, he represents them here, as elsewhere, under the image of a burden which we must lay off (Heb. iv. 22; Eph. iv. 22; Col. iii. 8; cf. Rom. vi. 4).

We also find in St. Paul quite a series of metaphors which are not new in themselves and which are less striking, because they are common among all the classic authors; however, they are worthy of remark, because he is the only one of the sacred writers who makes use thereof; they are those which he borrows from the customs of the pagans, and particularly from their games and gymnastic exercises.

The Hebrews never made use of such images, either because they were little familiar to them, or because, they abhorred pagan customs and usages. Especially did they show a lively aversion for the games of the Greeks, since the time when the impious Jason, in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes, had made the attempt to introduce them at Jerusalem (II. Mach. iv. 14). St. Paul, born at Tarsus, in a Hellenized country — St. Paul who makes himself all to all — was not afraid to make use of them in writing to the new Christians, and draw comparisons from the works they had been accustomed to read in their poets and orators. He borrowed his figures, not only from the military art and the marine, but also from the combats of the prize-fighters and race-runners. He calls faith a shield (Eph. vi. 16; cf. I. Thess. v. 8), hope a helmet (I. Thess. v. 8; cf. Eph. vi. 17), or, in employing a still more beautiful figure, of which Christian art has made even a symbol, an anchor (Heb. v. 19). The latter similitude is unique in Scripture, which indeed offers us some comparisons borrowed from the armor of warriors (Is. lix. 17; Wisd. v. 18–21, etc.), but none from the usages of navigation.

The allusions to Hellenic games are abounding in the writings of the Apostle of the Gentiles: he recalls to mind the wrestling and race-running, the crown (I. Cor. ix. 25) and rewards granted to the conquerors; in the Epistles to the Corinthians (I. Cor. ix. 24, 25), to the Philippians (iii. 12, 13, 14), to Timothy (I. Tim. vi. 12; II. Tim. ii. 3–6); he speaks of the patience of the prize-fighters in the evil day

(Eph. vi. 13, etc.), of their sobriety and watchings (cf. II. Cor. vi. 5), of their firmness (Phil. iv. 1).

If St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, had not drawn any metaphor from the games of the Greeks, we would not need to be surprised at this, on account of the antipathy which his correspondents had for these exercises, but this kind of comparison had become so habitual to him, that he makes use thereof, although with more discretion, if we may express ourselves thus, and less clearly in addressing himself to the Jews, than in speaking to Gentiles. We read the word *agon* (Heb. xii. 1) which designates the place where they celebrated the solemn games, such as the Pythic and Olympic games, in the Epistle to the Hebrews, as well as in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, Philippians, Colossians, and to Titus (Heb. xii. 1; I. Thess. ii. 3; Phil. i. 30; Col. ii. 1; I. Tim. iv. 7); the word and the figure are exclusively peculiar to St. Paul. The expressions "the hands hang down" (Heb. xii. 12), "feeble knees" (xii. 12), make allusion to the gesture by which the conquered acknowledged the conqueror in the wrestling; the word "exhortation" (Heb. xii. 5; I. Thess. ii. 3), to the acclamations by which they excited the athletes; the "straight tracks" (Heb. xii. 13), marked by the wheels of the chariots, or road which the race-runners had to follow; "the fruit of peace" (Heb. xii. 11) on the olive branch which the conqueror carried. All these expressions we read in the same chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. Thus the employment of this kind of metaphor, quite peculiar to the great Apostle among the sacred writers, indicates to us in him the author of this Epistle.

We find also his manner of writing in the arrangement of his thoughts and in the order according to which he disposes them. He has the habit to enounce first, only in passing, an idea to which he attaches importance, to take it up again afterwards, when he judges proper, and then to give to it all the developments possible; this proceeding is employed in the Epistle to the Hebrews as in the others. Thus he returns to the second chapter on the thought which he had expressed incidentally in the first chapter, that the angels are much inferior to Jesus Christ. In the sixth chapter he announces that the Saviour is priest according to the order of Melchisedech, and he explains this in chapter the seventh. In the ninth chapter he explains the symbolism of the Tabernacle of which he had already spoken in the third chapter, and he develops in the eleventh chapter

what that faith is by which the just live, and which he had mentioned in the tenth chapter.

One of the most notable expressions, in the writing which we are considering, is the employment of the pronoun "some," which occurs quite frequently in the Paulinian Letters. What deserves more our attention in the usage which he makes of this pronoun is there where the Old Testament says "many," or employs a more general term. The meaning remains the same, although the expressions are different; but the language of the Apostle is nevertheless characteristic.

Thus from whatever side we may look upon this writing, we always find therein St. Paul: it is his doctrine, his way of thinking and conceiving; they are his figures and favorite expressions. Undoubtedly, each of the peculiarities we have pointed out, taken isolately, might not be conclusive, but their *ensemble* is imposing and cannot fail to gain the assent of every reflective reader, especially if he will consider that all these minute remarks only confirm the tradition of the Church. This tradition is sufficient to make the truth known, but this critical study will corroborate it and render it more comprehensive.

There remain, however, two difficulties against the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews,—the absence of signature and the difference of style.

It is perfectly true that the Epistle to the Hebrews carries neither the name of its author nor the name of the persons to whom the Letter is addressed, and that the style notably differs from that of the other Paulinian writings; but we cannot draw from any of these facts a decisive proof against its authenticity, as we shall see.

The thirteen other Epistles of St. Paul that have been preserved to us, all commence by an analogous signature: *Paul, apostle, to all that are at Rome* (Rom. i. 1, 7), or: *To the Church of God that is at Corinth*, etc. (I. Cor. i. 2). Only the Epistle to the Hebrews commences *ex abrupto: God who, at sundry times and in divers manners, spoke in times past to the fathers*, etc. (Heb. i. 1). If this writing, they object, were from St. Paul, he would have put his name at the head of it, as he did to all the others.

The conclusion is not well founded. St. John has inscribed his name in the first verse of the Apocalypse, after the example of the prophets of the old law, but he has not placed it at the head of his

Gospel; he even designated himself merely by the vague word of *presbyteros* "the ancient priest," in his second and third Epistles, and he is not named at all in the first. Have we the right to conclude from this that St. John is not the author of the fourth Gospel and of the three Epistles which tradition attributes to him? Not at all. So we have not the right to contest the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews in supporting ourselves upon the sole motive that the Apostle judged it proper not to inscribe his name for causes known to him.

It is difficult to find out to-day what these motives were; they could be known in a certain manner only by history, but history is silent as to this subject. We can nevertheless indicate some with probability. St. Augustine believed that the Apostle did not put here his ordinary signature, "for fear that the Jews, who hated him, might feel offended in seeing his name therein, and would read with hostile dispositions, or even refuse to read at all, what he had written for their salvation."

Whatever may be the value of this explanation, and whatever may have been the motive that directed St. Paul in the form which he gave to his writing, we can regard as certain that he did not wish to give to it the appearance of a letter properly speaking, but that of a discourse. This is a very important point to signalize and which gives the solution of the present question. St. Paul calls all his other writings "letters," but he does not give this name to the instruction which he sends to the Hebrews. We could qualify it correctly as an epistle, because it has resemblance enough to his other Epistles to merit this title; because it addresses itself to his "brethren," as in the foregoing Letters (Heb. iii. 12, etc.); because finally, he has, so to speak, affixed his signature, as we have remarked before, in ending it by the formula which was peculiar to him: *Grace be with you all* (Heb. xiii. 25); but in reality he did not wish to write a letter properly speaking, and instead of calling his writing an "epistle," he calls it, in several places, a "discourse" (Heb. xiii. 22; vi. 1; cf. v. 11, 12). Now, since his intention was to write a "discourse," not a letter, he could not put a signature to it as to a letter, and he had to enter upon his subject by an exordium, just as orators do. It was sufficient for him, for it was a discourse written and not spoken, to put at the end an advice, and this course he followed indeed.

The second objection against the authenticity of the Epistle to the Hebrews, drawn from the striking difference of style that exists between this writing and the other Letters of St. Paul, might appear grave. "Clement of Alexandria, and Origen, good judges in matters of Greek style," says Renan, "do not find in our Epistle the color of the style of Paul. St. Jerome is of the same opinion." This, however, did not hinder the Alexandrine Doctors nor St. Jerome from affirming categorically that the writing was from St. Paul.

The very nature of this work may, in the first place, explain to us the difference of style. Since the Apostle wrote a "discourse," and not a "letter," he could not express himself in the same manner, both compositions being different; nobody composes a discourse as he draws up his correspondence.

Undoubtedly this reason does not give a complete account of the particular tone of the Epistle to the Hebrews; but to completely explain it, it is sufficient to recall to mind the tradition preserved by Clement of Alexandria, and which we have already reported. "Paul," he tells us, "drew up the Epistle to the Hebrews in the Hebrew language, and St. Luke carefully translated it into Greek for the Hellenists." (In Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 14.) Behold how we can understand this brief notice.

The Apostle, writing for his ancient co-religionists, of whom some knew only Greek, made use of the latter, as St. Matthew had done in the first drawing up of his Gospel, in their mother tongue, either the ancient Hebrew, or rather the Syro-Chaldaic, or Aramaic which was spoken then in Syria and which he spoke himself (Acts xxi. 40); but as a great number of Jews spoke Greek, and as many even understood nothing but Greek, in order that they also might read his "discourse," he caused it to be translated into Greek by St. Luke, who was well versed in this language and who was sojourning with him. He did as the Ptolemies did in Egypt, who published their edicts in Coptic and in Greek, as they do in all those countries where several languages are spoken, or where the official documents appear simultaneously in diverse languages; or rather, as they did equally in the synagogues, where, after having read the text of the Sacred Books in the original language, they translated it into the language of the country in which they lived.

It is true, and it is generally believed that our Greek text is original, but we can very well call original a text that was drawn up among the conditions we have described, that is, under the eyes and with the revision of St. Paul. Bilingual documents are original, when the text, in each language, is of the same date and equally authentic, published by one and the same authority, emanating, in one word, from the same source.

If one does not wish to accept a Hebrew or Aramaic authorship of the Epistle, we can perfectly explain the difference of style in admitting that St. Luke has been the secretary, and not the translator of St. Paul: the Apostle indicated to him the thoughts which he wished to communicate to the Hebrews and the disciple wrote for him. We know that many papal documents, for instance, are not drawn up by the Popes themselves, who content themselves to indicate to their secretaries the fundamental ideas which they desire to have put in writing, and who afterwards give their approbation to this work. These documents are, nevertheless, attributed, and with right, to the Pontiffs who have signed them. According to all we have said, St. Paul did not limit himself to furnishing in a general manner the subject of his "discourse" to the Hebrews. We have found therein his thoughts, his figures and favorite expressions, but he left a certain latitude for the form to the one who wrote his Epistle into Greek. Hence it comes that it has a peculiar style which, as we have remarked, resembles that of St. Luke in the third Gospel and in the Acts. In his writings, as in the Epistle, we meet with some words which we read nowhere else in the New Testament. However, St. Luke cannot be looked upon under any consideration as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, for the thoughts and material are from St. Paul, and all that ought to be left in the Greek of the spirit and genius of the great Apostle has been left therein indeed, and thus manifests to us its real author.

CHAPTER VII

CATHOLIC EPISTLES

I. Epistle of St. James.— Since the most ancient times, the name *Catholic Epistles* has been given to the seven Letters which form a part of the New Testament, and which have been composed by other Apostles than St. Paul, that is, according to the order of our editions, those of St. James, St. Peter, St. John, and St. Jude. We shall examine them one after another, commencing with the Epistle of St. James.

In the famous passage where he enumerates the writings of the New Testament, Eusebius of Cesarea ranks the Letter of St. James in the category of the Scriptures that are «contested.» «The first of the Epistles called Catholic,» he says, «is attributed to James. We must know that it is looked upon as spurious, because few ancients make mention thereof, just like that which is attributed to Jude, and which is also one of the seven Catholic Epistles. We know, nevertheless, that these two Letters are read in the most of the Churches together with the others.» (Eusebius, *H. E.* ii. 23.) Luther treated the Epistle of St. James as a «straw Epistle.» We do not need to tell that Rationalists of our time deny its authenticity.

In spite of the doubts of Eusebius and the negation of contemporary infidels, ancient tradition is in favor of the canonicity and authenticity of the Epistle of St. James. Everybody acknowledges that Pope St. Clement alludes repeatedly to it, at the end of the first century, in his first letter to the Corinthians. Hermas, in the *Pastor*, reproduces from it almost word for word five verses and inspired himself with about ten others. The Syriac version under the name of Peschito, which omits the short Catholic Epistles, has preserved nevertheless that of St. James, in giving to it the name of this Apostle. Now, this version goes back to the most remote antiquity.

The intrinsic examination of the Letter confirms the testimony of tradition: «All agrees well,» says Mgr. Ginouilhiac, «with the state of Christianity at Jerusalem in the latter years of St. James. As St. James was much respected by the Jews, the faithful were in peace from this side. But, in the bosom of the Church, some minds were

troubled; two kinds of false doctors had risen therein; the ones who exalted beyond measure the importance of the law, the others who, under pretext of evangelical liberty, did despise not only the legal observances, but considered the duties towards moral law of little importance, especially those which have for object fraternal charity and its works. Among the latter, as among the first, the greatest number were self-conceited men, great talkers and imperious men, and in this they considered wisdom to consist. Against these vices this Epistle is directed. It has for object to unmask these false doctors and to give an idea of true Christian wisdom." (*Les origines du Christianisme.*)

"The Epistle of James," says Renan, "is by far the best written work of the New Testament; the Grecism thereof is pure and almost classical. . . . The document becomes perfectly the character of James. The author is a Jewish rabbi; he adheres strictly to the law; to designate the reunion of the faithful, he makes use of the word synagogue; his Epistle resembles, by its texts, the synoptic Gospels, which we see later on going forth from the Christian family of which James had been the head. . . . When he speaks of humility, of patience, of mercy, etc., James seems to have kept the remembrance of the very words of Jesus." The contents of the letter are, therefore, in accord with general tradition, which attributes it to the first bishop of Jerusalem.

According to many Rationalists, it is partly directed against St. Paul and in contradiction to the doctrine of the great Apostle. "He is an adversary of Paul," says Renan, in speaking of St. James. . . . "We feel that he held a good deal of the law. A whole paragraph of his Epistle (James ii. 14, etc.,) is devoted to warn the faithful against the doctrine of Paul on the uselessness of good works and on salvation through faith. A phrase of James (ii. 24) is the direct negation of a phrase of the Epistle to the Romans (iii. 28). In opposition with the Apostle of the Gentiles (Rom. iv. 1, etc.), the Apostle of Jerusalem upholds (James ii. 21, etc.), that Abraham was saved through good works, that faith without good works is a dead faith. The demons have the faith and apparently are not saved. Leaving here his habitual moderation, James calls his adversary *a vain man*" (James ii. 20).

The vain or void man of whom St. James speaks is neither St. Paul nor any other determined person, it is in general the one

who is void of good works. The antagonism and contradiction which they suppose between the two Apostles are imaginary. St. Paul, in the Epistle to the Romans and in the Epistle to the Galatians, insists a good deal on the truth that faith saves man, not the works. St. James, on the contrary, says that faith alone does not save us without the works. Both are right and do not contradict each other at all. The works of which St. James speaks are not, indeed, those of which St. Paul speaks. The latter speaks of the works of the law, of the legal practices of the Jews, and he says very correctly that the observance of the Jewish practices does not justify without faith. St. James does not occupy himself with legal works, but with Christian works, which is quite different. True religion, he says, consists not only in believing, but in conforming one's conduct to his faith; not in observing the law of Moses, but the law of God and of Jesus Christ. This doctrine is identical with that of St. Paul. St. James does not mention, among the obligatory works, the circumcision, the observance of the ritual prescriptions, etc., he enumerates exclusively the works of charity and of mercy (James i. 27). His Epistle, addressed to converted Jews, has for its principal end, not to make them observe the Mosaic law, but on the contrary, to detach them from it in order to occupy themselves exclusively with the observance of the moral precepts of the Gospel.

II. Epistles of St. Peter.—We have two Epistles of St. Peter. Eusebius classes the First among those whose authenticity is admitted without contestation by all the Churches, and it has been, indeed, known and quoted by the most ancient ecclesiastical writers. These testimonies have not, however, hindered Claudius from attributing its composition to a disciple of St. Paul, but the authorities in favor of this Letter have such great weight that most of the Rationalists hesitate to reject it, even if they do not expressly attribute it to the chief of the Apostles. In reality, they have no argument to bring up against it.

The Second Epistle of St. Peter, on account of its brevity, has been less known by the ancients than the first, or rather they had not so often occasion to make allusion to it and to quote it. Negative criticism draws from this a pretext to condemn it. "The Second Epistle attributed to Peter is certainly apocryphal," affirms Renan. "We recognize therein, at a glance, an artificial compo-

sition, an imitation composed of shreds of apostolic writings, especially from the Epistle of Jude. We will not insist on this point, for we believe that the *secunda Petri* had, among true critics, not one single defender.»

The defenders of the Second Epistle of St. Peter, even to-day, «among true critics,» are not wanting, and in spite of the first hesitations of tradition, which we can easily explain if we consider how difficult it must have been, at that time, to be positively informed on the authenticity of a short letter, — outside the place where it had been written and addressed,— it is certain that in the third and fourth centuries, it was universally agreed to acknowledge this writing as from the prince of the Apostles. These shiftings have, however, the advantage of showing us that the primitive Church did not so easily accept writings which they presented to her as of apostolic origin, which proves the wrong of rationalistic criticism to-day, in giving so little weight to the authority of tradition.

III. Epistles of St. John.—The First Epistle of St. John is, so to speak, the preface of his Gospel. The relations between these two writings are so intimate that they would be sufficient to establish the authenticity of the Letter, even if tradition would be silent as to this point. Besides, it is very explicit. Papias, St. Polycarp, St. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, St. Cyprian, do not leave us any doubt on this subject, and in antiquity not one single discordant voice was heard.

In our days, some adventurous minds and friends of the paradox have, nevertheless, made the attempt to express some doubts in supporting themselves upon intrinsic reasons. Lange has reproached this Letter with having neither any personal nor local character, and he supposed that it might have been written by a writer who tried to imitate the style of the fourth Gospel; but were this reproach well founded, it would prove nothing; for the Letter is not addressed to any particular Church nor to a determined person, as is the case with the Epistles of St. Paul. It is generally admitted that the objections they have formulated against the Epistle of St. John are insignificant and without value.

The Second and Third Epistles do not enjoy in favor of their authenticity such decisive extrinsic proofs as the first, which is easily understood, on account of their brevity and their subject; the

testimonies are, nevertheless, more than sufficient to establish their origin. In the fifth century there is hardly any doubt as to this subject. In the fourth century St. Ephrem attributes them to St. John. Aurelius does the same in 256, in the Council of Carthage, as well as St. Irenæus, about the year 200, in his refutation of heresies. About 250, Dionysius of Alexandria, and about 300, Alexander of Alexandria, also acknowledged them as being from St. John.

The intrinsic examination of the two Letters of St. John is conclusive in favor of their authenticity. The title is not that which a forger would have imagined. The tone, style, and thoughts are the same as in the first Epistle. Of the thirteen verses of which the second is composed, there are eight which are found, in the main, in the first. «The identity of authorship of these two writings is generally admitted; they form an intimate family, an original group in the bosom of apostolic literature. Christianity appears therein raised . . . to a height, where all the contrasts . . . confound themselves into a unity of a spiritualism . . . of an incomparable serenity.» (A. Sabatier, in the *Encyclopedie des sciences religieuses*, vol. vii. p. 177.) If we read these Epistles, we are reminded of the paintings of the Catacombs, which breathe only peace and sweetness, and the ideas of which have been drawn partly from the Gospel of St. John. The faithful are represented therein under the form of doves who joyfully and lovingly nourished themselves with the gifts of the Lord. The well-beloved Apostle appears to us in his Letters, as well as in the picture which he traces of his divine Master, as the type of these sweet doves, so dear to our Fathers in the faith.

IV. Epistle of St. Jude.—The Epistle of St. Jude, brother of St. James, bishop of Jerusalem, is placed by Eusebius among the Epistles of a doubtful authenticity (*Hist. Eccl.* iii. 25), but St. Jerome assures us that, in spite of the objections they had raised against it in his time, it was accepted by the entire Church (*De vir. ill.* 4). Clement of Alexandria quoted it already under the name of St. Jude (*Strom.* iii. 2). Origen did the same (*Comm. in Matt.* xiii. 55), as well as Tertullian (*De habitu mulierierum*, 3) and the Muratorian canon. In the fourth century, everybody received it as authentic. In spite of the unanimity of tradition since this time, modern infidels reject it, and several among them attribute it

to an Alexandrine author of the second century. As to the proofs which they give, they are pure hypotheses.

They can raise against the authenticity of this Epistle only one somewhat serious objection, that which St. Jerome mentions, and which is based on what the author says of Henoch (Jude 14–15). They suppose that he quotes the apocryphal book which carries the name of Henoch, and even as to the subject of the discussion between the archangel St. Michael and the devil (Jude 9), the *Assumption of Moses*. The latter writing is unknown, but we possess in fact a book of Henoch, wherein we read the prophecy which St. Jude attributes to him. Only we can maintain with skilful critics, that the Apostle spoke according to the traditions current among the Jews, as had been done by St. Stephen (Acts vii. 22, 23, 30); St. Paul (Gal. iii. 19; II. Tim. iii. 8; Heb. ii. 2; xi. 24); St. James (v. 17), and not according to an apocryphal writing. It was the author of the latter who also drew from tradition, or it was a Christian who, doing over again the work, took from the Catholic Epistle what was said of Henoch and has inserted it in his work, on account of the authority which the apostolic Letter enjoyed.

CHAPTER VIII

THE APOCALYPSE

I. False Interpretation of the Apocalypse.—Rationalists of our days are quite generally agreed to admit the authenticity of the Apocalypse and to attribute it to St. John. Their end is to make use of it as a weapon against the other writings of the New Testament, but they are right at least in acknowledging it as the work of the author to whom tradition attributes it. However, in doing so they mingle with their hypotheses a mass of errors, some very grave. Renan has appropriated them for the most part in the volume of his *Origines du Christianisme*, which he has entitled the *Antichrist*. Behold the summary of the theories of negative criticism of the Apocalypse such as the author of the *Antichrist* exhibits them.

In the moment when the Apocalypse was composed, there remained of the Apostles, whom St. Paul called "pillar apostles," only St. John (Gal. ii. 9). "It is certain that the two Apostles (Peter and Paul) were dead in the year 70. . . . James was dead (in 62)." These first affirmations are correct, but the error does not tarry to show itself. To prepare the reader for the conclusions which they wish to make him accept, the Apostle St. John, contrary to all the testimonies of tradition, is represented to us as "violent and fanatical, the most hateful against Paul," animated against him with a "terrible hatred." They speak of his "great harshness," of his "extreme intolerance," of his "hard and rough language against those that believed different from him." His Apocalypse is qualified as a "furious-looking invective"; "its author," they say, "is too passionate; he sees everything through a veil of a sanguine apoplexy, or in the glare of a conflagration." Such is the picture which Renan draws of the author. Behold now how he arranges the facts.

St. John had probably accompanied St. Peter in his voyage to Rome in the year 62. In 67, during the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, John was condemned, according to an ancient tradition, to be plunged alive into a kettle of boiling oil, in the place since called the Latin Gate. He escaped death. Shortly afterwards he left Rome with several Christians and fled to Ephesus, in Asia.

Renan admits, for the needs of his cause, some of these accounts of tradition about St. John the Evangelist, but he disfigures and transforms them according to his fancy. To explain after his fashion certain passages of the Apocalypse, the author of this book must have seen with his own eyes, since the time of Nero, the Pozzuoli, the Solfatara, and the corruption that reigned in these places of pleasure, frequented by the gilded youth of the capital of the world. The most of the testimonies refer to a date much posterior to the torment of St. John. However, let us not insist on this. They generally agree that he came to Asia about the year 65.

Four years afterwards, to believe Rationalists, the Apostle would have composed his "furious-looking invective." According to them, the Apocalypse was published in Asia Minor on the tenth or fourteenth of January in the year 69, and at the end of the month it was already known by the seven Churches. St. John tells us, indeed, that he composed it at Patmos (Apoc. i. 9), but Rationalists do not admit this. Tradition assures us also that the Apostle was exiled

on this little island. This point is equally denied, because the island of Patmos formed no part of the places of transportation which are mentioned by the classical authors. In reality these reasons prove nothing; no writer of antiquity has left us an official and complete list of the islands of banishment, and what Suetonius tells us of the motives which made them choose *in asperrimas insularum*, agrees perfectly with the island of Patmos. The affirmation of Rationalists, that the Apocalypse was written at Ephesus, has absolutely no foundation; also are they obliged to refute themselves in some sort by acknowledging that this book might have been written at Patmos.

Renan tries to set off the contrast that exists between the pleasant and cheerful Patmos and the gloomy visions of the Apocalypse. "Of a small island, made to serve as the scene of the delicious romance of *Daphnis and Chloe*, or shepherd scenes like those of Theocritus and of Moschus, he makes a black volcano filled with fire and brimstone. . . . Entire days he was in face of Mount Mycale, without thinking of the victory of the Hellenists over the Persians; . . . these glorious remembrances did not exist for him. The poem of Patmos ought to have been some *Hero and Leander*, or a pastoral like that of Longus, relating the plays of beautiful children on the threshold of love. The gloomy enthusiast, thrown by chance on the Ionian shores, did not leave his Biblical remembrances." (*The Antichrist*, p. 377.)

This brilliant picture of Patmos, by an artist who confesses to having been unable to visit it, is a picture of imagination. Behold the reality, according to an exact traveller, whose name is an authority—Victor Guerin: "Patmos is hardly anything more, I admit, than a barren rock. Seen from the sea, it appears less barren than it really is, on account of the bushes which stand on the flanks of some of the mountains, and which give to it from a distance, through this green covering, an appearance of fruitfulness; but if one passes over the interior, he perceives very soon that its stony and ungrateful soil is hardly fit for culture, except in some small valleys. . . . It is mountainous from one end to another." (*Description de l'ile de Patmos.*)

What Rationalists write about the date of the prophecy of St. John and about the circumstances that led him to publish it, is not more correct than what Renan says about the place where it was composed. "The Apocalypse," according to them, "rests upon an error

of fact, namely that Nero was not dead in the year 68; it foretold an event which was never realized, for it announces that Nero will reappear and take up again the reins of the Empire. A false prophecy; for Nero was really dead and never reappeared." Behold the foundation of the theory of Rationalism, and which it has developed at length.

In our refutation we shall not stop at all the points of detail. They claim that the letters of advice, which form the first chapters of the Apocalypse, are directed against St. Paul and contain against him "atrocious injuries." The names under which they pretend to find the Apostle of the Gentiles simply designate Gnostic heretics, as tradition has constantly affirmed.

The prophecy of St. John was not composed in the year 68 or 69. No ancient author has attributed to it this date; also Rationalists are unable to bring forward one single authority in their favor. At the foundation their only proofs are the needs of the cause; this hypothesis is absolutely indispensable to them in order to establish that the Apocalypse is no prophetic book. But all historical testimonies are against them: "The date of the Apocalypse," says William Bullock, "is fixed by the great majority of the critics between the year 95 and the year 97. The imposing testimony of St. Irenæus (disciple of Papias and of St. Polycarp, they themselves disciples of St. John the Evangelist) is almost alone sufficient to reject every other date (St. Irenæus, *Adv. Haeres.* v. 30). Eusebius also reports a tradition, which he does not question at all, according to which, under the persecution of Domitian, St. John, apostle and evangelist, was still alive, and was exiled on the island of Patmos, on account of the testimony which he had rendered to the divine Word. We can see in the works of Clement of Alexandria and of Origen allusions in the same sense. We know of no ancient writer of the first three centuries that assigns to the Apocalypse another place or another date." (*Revelation*, in Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible.*) It is, therefore, useless to quote all the testimonies we can collect in the fourth century and in the following in favor of the date furnished by St. Irenæus. Let us content ourselves to corroborate their authority by the three following remarks: (1) The seven Churches of Asia Minor could not yet have acquired in 69 the importance which the first chapters of the Apocalypse suppose; (2) the persecution of Nero did not extend itself to the provinces and cannot be that to which St. John makes allusion;

(3) the Nicolaites, who are condemned in chapter the second as heretics, did not yet form a sect under Galba.

Thus tumbles down the scaffolding so painfully erected by Rationalists. If the composition of the Apocalypse is posterior to the year 69, as it cannot be doubted, their explanation of this book is entirely false. But, not content with this summary refutation, however sufficient it may be, let us examine the most important points of their interpretation.

Nero, they tell us, is the hero of the Apocalypse. "If the Gospel is the book of Jesus, the Apocalypse is the book of Nero," says a Rationalist. Infidel criticism seeks to support itself on some authorities to establish this. It did not succeed. It alleges St. Justin, Meliton, Commodianus, and Victorinus of Pettau. St. Justin has been a millenary, but he never said that Nero was the Antichrist. The commentary of St. Meliton on the *Apocalypse* is lost; we cannot know what he thought. Commodianus has compared, in his verses, the Antichrist with Nero, but he has not identified the two personages. St. Victorinus says expressly that the Antichrist will come at the end of the world and that the Apocalypse was written under Domitian.

Rationalists, having tradition against them, seek in the Apocalypse itself the proof that Nero is the hero. This emperor is not named therein in proper terms, but is designated, according to them, in a very transparent manner. Behold how: "The number of the beast (of which St. John speaks) is the number of a man. This number is 666. Really, if we add together the letters of the name of Nero, transcribed into Hebrew, *qsr nron*, according to their numerical value, we obtain the number 666.* *Neron Kesar* was indeed the name by which the Christians of Asia designated the monster; the coins of Asia carry as legend: *Neron Kaisar*. These kinds of calculations were familiar to the Jews, and constituted a cabalistic play which they called *ghematria;* the Greeks of Asia were not strangers to it; in the second century the Gnostics were passionately fond of it."

This calculation of the number of the beast is certainly one of the most ingenious that has been proposed. The importance of this calculation is especially derived, in the eyes of criticism, from the

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* *Qoph, 100; samech, 60; resch, 200; nun, 50; resch, 200; vav. 6; nun, 50=666.* —(See Apoc. xiii. 18).

opinion, held by a number of infidels that Nero is the hero of the Apocalypse and that all the visions which it contains are only allusions to the events which followed his death. Many of the contemporary Rationalists, however, declare that this is the principal proof of their explanation. It is far, nevertheless, from being incontestable.

This calculation supposes that a book written in Greek gives a cabalistic figure the value of which we must seek, not in Greek letters, but in Hebrew letters. We have to admit that it is very strange. If it is not admissible that this mysterious figure can be calculated according to the value of Latin letters, it is not this any more according to the value of Hebrew letters. The most ancient calculators of the mysterious number, like St. Irenæus, have tried to solve the problem according to the system of Greek numeration, and everything goes to show that they were right, for not only did St. John write in Greek, but for Greeks, and those of his readers of Asia who were Jews by origin did not know, at least the most of them, anything but Greek, and they would never have dreamt of seeking outside their usual language for the value of the number 666.

Moreover, in the explanation adopted by Rationalists, we must leave out one of the letters which entered the word Cesar,— the *iod* which followed the *qof*,— for, in keeping account of this we have no longer 666, but 676. They answer to this insoluble difficulty that *later* on they wrote *qsr* without *iod*, but St. John could not foresee this change of orthography.

Finally, it is far from being sure that we must seek a proper name of a man, with or without title of dignity, in the figure 666. We are here face to face with an enigma whose secret the Apostle probably never revealed to anybody, because the most ancient commentators and St. Irenæus himself, although he had known disciples of St. John, have proposed the explanation thereof only with hesitation and incertitude. It would need entire pages to enumerate only the personages whom they believed to discover in this wonderful number. Perhaps it belongs to the future to reveal to us this enigmatic word, and when the true Antichrist shall have appeared, what is so obscure to-day, will then be as clear as daylight.

Be this as it may, even if we would accept the calculation in question, and that Nero was really the prototype of the beast, it would not follow at all that the author of Apocalypse imagined that Nero, in the moment when he wrote, was not really dead.

We read, in fact, formally: *The beast, which thou sawest, was and is no more*" (Apoc. xvii. 8). The author adds, it is true: *It shall come up out of the bottomless pit;* but these words, far from proving that Nero, in supposing that he is the beast, was still alive in the thought of the writer, only confirm the fact of the death of the one of whom he speaks, because he places him in the *abyssos*, that is, in the sojourn of the dead and especially of the demons (Apoc. iv. 1, etc.; xi. 7; xx. 1; cf. Luke viii. 31; Rom. x. 7). We cannot maintain seriously, besides, that, by the latter part of the phrase, St. John announces that Nero will rise again and leave hell. These words only prove that the Antichrist will be a man as wicked as a demon coming forth from the abyss, and that this new beast will have great traits of resemblance to the ancient beast that persecuted the saints.

II. Conclusion. — The Apocalypse is by its date and the place which it occupies in the sacred collection the last of our Sacred Books. The examination we have made of the prophetic work of St. John marks, therefore, the end of our labor.* We have discussed now all the objections of any importance that have been made in the different periods of the history of the Church, and particularly in our century against the inspired writings; we have frequently exhibited them in the very words of our adversaries and we have proved that they are without foundation.

Arrived at the terminus of this long voyage across the centuries and through the books of both the Old and New Testaments, we can well affirm with the Catholic Church: The revelation contained in the Bible is invulnerable; it is the work of God and nothing can destroy it nor shake it; all the concerted efforts of human passion will be in vain; it has always resisted and will always resist the assaults of her enemies, it will triumph over all their attacks. An insidious criticism will never succeed in overthrowing the wonderful structure erected by the hand of the Almighty. A false science will not succeed in darkening the brightness of the truth manifested to men through the source of all science. The Celsus, the Porphyrius, could only smother the faith of the Church in its cradle; the Strauss, the Christian Bauer, the Wellhausen and their followers will not be stronger in the nineteenth century against our Sacred Books. *Verbum Domini nostri manet in aeternum* (Is. xl. 8; cf. Ps. cxvi. 2).

The objections of infidels in our days against the Scriptures have for cause, as we have seen, the negation of the supernatural. They do

*In *Part Four*, which forms a sort of supplement to the preceding volumes, we shall answer to the scientific objections raised against our Sacred Books: the Mosaic Cosmogony, the Origin of Man, Antiquity of Man, etc.

not believe in the intervention of God in human things, they reject the miracle, the inspiration, prophecy and revelation; many of them deny even the existence of a personal God. Consequently, as the Bible is an inspired book, filled with prophecies and miraculous accounts, as it is the deposit of divine revelation, they treat it as an enemy; for them these miracles must be false, these predictions must be lies, the book itself must be a purely natural work, wherein we find all the imperfections, all the failings of human thought, and about its origin Christian tradition is completely deceived.

Hence the unheard of efforts of negative criticism to discredit this divine Book which is the condemnation of its principle and doctrines. It does not reject it, because it has previously established that it merits no belief; no; it combats it, because it is the proof that a special Providence rules the destinies of man. It is rationalistic and has no other end but to justify its rationalism. Its accusations are thus of a partisan spirit; it denies the authenticity of parts of the Bible which contain miracles or prophecies, in order not to accept its prophecies and miracles; it accumulates pretexts and paradoxes against the sacred teaching, in order to deny inspiration and revelation. The true source of the difficulties raised against the Scriptures is, therefore, properly speaking, not historical criticism, but a false philosophic system, and condemned by sound reason. This, indeed, establishes the existence of a personal God, creator of the world and of man, occupying Himself with His creatures, intervening, whenever He pleases, in a supernatural manner, that is, through the miracle, in human events, revealing the future and communicating His will, if He judges proper,—so many truths rejected by the actual enemies of our Sacred Books.

Negative criticism is, therefore, vicious in its principle; it is none the less this in its application. As its desire is to find the Bible at fault by all means, all means seem good to it. It prates with pompous names, it assumes outwardly an air of science, it affects a profound contempt for all those who do not believe as it does; it pronounces with an oracular tone so-called judgments without appeal, and it is not through the force of its arguments and the value of its reasons that it imposes upon the simple, and drags along prejudiced minds, but by its disdainful airs towards the faithful, through the audacity of its affirmations, and parading of a vain erudition.

In reality it is hollow, and has only the appearances of science. It is full of caprices and arbitrariness; prejudices make it blind; imagina-

tion replaces its reason; it substitutes subjective impressions for the testimonies of history, and by a sort of literary jugglery it tries to make us see something that does not exist; it presents its illusions and reveries as truth. *Narraverunt mihi iniqui fabulationes, sed non ut lex tua* (Ps. cxviii. 85; cf. Tim. iv. 3–4).

Ancient Greece, in a time of decay, saw arising pretended philosophers, Gorgias, Protagoras, who through captious reasonings and subtleties without end labored to undermine the best established truths and to ruin the very foundations of certitude. They are known in history under the name of sophists and the false arguments of which they made use, are called sophisms. Rationalistic critics are their successors; from them they borrowed their weapons, they follow the same course, employ a similar method, and merit the same name. If they have affirmed, they imagine having proved; they bewilder the reader in making him pass through a labyrinth of minute facts, suppositions and hypotheses without number, and then assure him that they have led him where they wished to lead him. "And behold why thy daughter is dumb."

The truth will deliver us from all these sophisms. The sun will not cease to shine, because clouds can hide for some time the brightness of its rays; a moment comes when it tears asunder all the veils and when it inundates the world with its light. Certainly there are in Scripture some obscurities. In this Book, several centuries old, composed under another heaven, in a language long since dead, by men of another race, differing from us in their morals, habits, and needs; in this Book, copied thousands of times by the hand of men who were protected neither against distractions nor mistakes, and who in several cases accidentally altered the primitive text; in this Book, finally written, it is true, by authors inspired by God, but speaking a human language, that is, a language which has the imperfections inseparable from all that is created, there have existed since the beginning, yet there exists to-day difficult passages, which need an explanation and which we are not always able to clear up fully. What, therefore, must surprise us? God, in His wisdom, wished that we should have some merit for our faith, and it was not His desire that the inspiration and the divinity of the Bible should be as evident as mathematical truths. If the Sacred Book did not present any obscurity nor any difficulty, if in the course of time it had undergone no alteration, if all the copies were absolutely identical, if all the

translations would render in a perfect manner the meaning of the original, this would be the most striking, the most palpable of miracles that ever took place upon earth; but Providence did not wish to perform this miracle. Our Lord has instituted a Church in order that it may make His Word known; He has, moreover, given to his Scriptures divine traits which the simple and upright soul can perceive, and He has judged this sufficient.

Who, indeed, is the man without prejudice that, in reading our Sacred Books with a pure heart, will not recognize therein his God, and the trace of His steps? No, whatever infidelity may say and pretend, the Bible is not a book like others; it is not a human composition, with its weaknesses, inexactitudes and errors; it is a work with which nothing can be compared, even among the productions of the most beautiful minds that honor mankind. Let them quote, therefore, we will not say, a collection of works, various, like those which Scripture contains, by their origin, subject and time when they have been drawn up, but one single writing of profane antiquity, elevating itself above the aberrations and turpitudes of paganism, in which we cannot discover any dogmatic or moral error; a writing which, without ever weakening, always distinguishes itself by the purity of its doctrine, the elevation of thought, the depth of religious sentiment, in one word, by a transcendent and superhuman character? The Bible, and the Bible alone, unites all these extraordinary qualities. Well, then, is it not really wonderful that a collection of so different works, the one historical, others poetical and moral, risen among one of the smallest nations of the East, cannot furnish any serious hold for a malevolent criticism and force from the most sublime intelligences, as from an Augustine, a Thomas Aquinas, a Leibnitz, a Bossuet and even from a Jean Jacques Rousseau, cries of admiration? Indeed, no other book is similar to this Book.

We find in Plato beautiful pages which are an honor for the human mind; we meet with in the old papyrus of Egypt, in the cuneiform tablets of Assyria, in the Vedas of India, in the ancient philosophical treatises of China, sentences and maxims of profound truth; and, in our days, they frequently compare them with certain passages of our Sacred Books. But they can compare thus with the word of God only a few apart and well-chosen fragments. Whilst all that is contained in the Scriptures, whilst all is beautiful, moral, and wonderful, what spots in these books of the sages of the earth, what errors, what

darknesses, and often what dirt! On the one hand, it is man with his weaknesses and failings; on the other, it is God with His purity and His indefectible truth.

In the visions of the Apocalypse, one day the Lord showed to the prophet of the new Law a river with living water, limpid and clear like crystal, which burst forth from the throne of the Lamb (Apoc. xxii. 1). It is the image of the sacred word of God in Holy Scripture; it alone is perfectly pure, without any mixture of corruption, and it alone can quench the thirst of the one that is thirsty after justice. The human sources of science are often poisoned, and the men who, deprived of faith, drink from their waters, draw from them germs of death; but the waves of this divine river, entrusted to the care of the Church, transfigure our souls and prepare them for eternal life.

Also, O, Lord, after having heard all that infidel men bring forth against Thy holy word, after having heard the critics and the Pharisees of our days repeating: "The language of Scripture is incredible and who can accept it?" (See John vi. 61), I repeat, from the bottom of my heart and soul: "I believe, O Lord, I believe. To whom shall we go, if not to Thee, O Eternal truth; Thou hast the words of eternal life." *Domine ad quem ibimus? verba vitæ æternæ habes.* (John vi. 69).

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